

Syria plus hopes an Assad-Clinton talks

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria said Monday it hoped a meeting between President Hafez Al Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton in Geneva later this month would reinforce U.N. resolutions calling for Israel to withdraw from Arab lands. Information Minister Mohammad Salameh said the meeting was part of Syrian and U.S. efforts to achieve comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Mr. Assad and Mr. Clinton are due to meet in Geneva in mid-January to try to push forward the Syrian-Israeli peace talks, deadlocked over the issue of the Golan Heights. "We hope this important summit will lead to effective results to implement the international legitimacy (U.N.) resolutions," Mr. Salameh said. The heads of the Syrian and Lebanese negotiating teams left for Washington on Monday to pave the way for a new round of talks, officials and diplomats said. Mouwafak Al Alfat of Syria and Suhail Shamas of Lebanon will consult U.S. officials on the next moves to the peace process, which also involves Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

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Hawatneh urges Arafat to renounce accord

DAMASCUS (AFP) — A Syrian-Palestinian leader Nayef Hawatneh, opposed to the autonomy accord, called on PLO leader Yasser Arafat Monday to renounce the deal. The leader of the Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) said Mr. Arafat should cancel the self-rule deal and join other Palestinian factions and Arab states bordering Israel in their search for a "global and balanced peace" in the Middle East. Mr. Hawatneh said Mr. Arafat was on bad terms with the majority of Palestinians and the accord he signed with Israel was "doomed to failure." Mr. Arafat had made PLO relations with Jordan deteriorate and "destroyed coordination with Syria and Lebanon" in the framework of the Arab-Israeli peace process. Mr. Hawatneh added.

U.S. says deal with North Korea near

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States and North Korea are near to a deal on Pyongyang's nuclear programme that could be wrapped up this week, a senior U.S. official said Monday. The official told reporters there are some issues that the International Atomic Energy Agency must address and this was being done "soon, quickly," but probably no further meetings between U.S. and North Korea negotiators were needed. While he held out the possibility that discussions could extend a bit longer, the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, went further than U.S. officials have previously in raising expectations that a deal with Pyongyang was close at hand.

U.S. planned Saddam killing before war

NEW YORK (R) — The United States developed a secret plan to assassinate Iraqi President Saddam Hussein before it launched the attack that drove Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991. Newsweek magazine has reported. The plan is detailed in excerpts from a new book, "The Commandos: The Inside Story of America's Secret Soldiers," written by the magazine's defence correspondent, Douglas Waller. The book said the plan called for an attack on President Saddam either by the army's Delta force or the navy's SEAL team 6 and was planned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff's special operations division. The attack was to have taken place as President Saddam travelled in and out of Kuwait by helicopter or motor home after his army overran the country in August 1990.

Ghaili names Kittani special adviser

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Iraqi diplomat Ismat Kittani was named a special adviser to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghaili, spokesman for the U.N. chief said Monday. Dr. Kittani, 64, who was the special envoy to Somalia and Tajikistan, will have the title of special adviser to the secretary general at the under-secretary general level. He will follow Asian affairs and the former Soviet Union, as well as the U.N. General Assembly, said Ahmad Fawzi, a spokesman for the secretary general.

Carey meets Sudan rebel leaders

NAIROBI (AFP) — The Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, met here Monday with the leaders of the rival rebel movements in southern Sudan following his controversial four-day trip to that region. The archbishop said he had appealed to John Garang and Riek Machar "to seek peace amongst themselves for the sake of the survival of their people and of peace in Sudan." The search for peace in Sudan is hindered by the continuing "division" in the SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army), these splits distress the people of the south and complicate negotiations with the Khartoum government.

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'Fast pace of events warrants urgent Jordan-PLO coordination'

Anani explains King's call on Arafat, says Jordan seeks transparency, clarity in dealings

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein's fresh emphasis on immediate and comprehensive efforts with Palestinians has been necessitated by the Kingdom's conviction that events in the Middle East are moving at an "alarming speed" which may see Israel attempting to reach separate agreements with the different Arab parties while Jordan is still reacting to developments, a senior Jordanian official said Monday.

Minister of Information Jawad Anani said the King made public his concerns over the lack of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination in a speech to army officers Saturday because he did not want the Kingdom to "find itself reacting in a way that is not in line with its overall policy."

Dr. Anani told a group of journalists that his reading of His Majesty's address to the senior officers, in which he cautioned PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat that if coordination did not start this week it could be the last chance before Jordan and PLO find themselves taking different courses, was borne out of concern that the "tempo of events is very high and moving at an alarming speed."

The King, Dr. Anani said, was also wanted to respond once and for all to Israeli-instigated claims that the Kingdom harboured political ambitions over the West Bank and Gaza Strip despite its reiterated policy of supporting the independent Palestinian decision in its negotiations with Israel.

When the Palestinian coordination committee arrives here today or tomorrow, Dr. Anani said, its Jordanian counterpart is going to insist on at least five main principles that would guide coordination between the two sides parallel to their separate negotiations with Israel.

These are: That the PLO deal with Jordan with transparency and clarity. "We want to be informed in time and have an exchange of documents,"

ments. Set the modus operandi for cooperation during the transitional period.

Open a future dialogue between Jordan and the PLO when the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on final status begin.

Talk frankly about what both parties expect from each other.

Ask where the PLO stands on existing agreements between Jordan and the PLO.

Ensure that there will be a continuous not sporadic process of coordination.

With Israel possibly reaching separate agreements with Arab parties to the peace negotiations, Dr. Anani said, the Kingdom was worried that Jordan would appear "weak and indecisive" as it continues to place Palestinian interests ahead of its own progress towards peace.

"We don't want to end up with separate courses rather than tracks," Dr. Anani said, explaining that the Middle East peace talks have produced four tracks of negotiations with Israel but also two courses of coordination, between Jordan and the PLO on the one hand and Syria and Lebanon on the other.

While explaining that the Jordan-PLO coordination course was a natural result of historical links of interest, there was fear that "inertia would be created by making (the parties) rivals and competitive in winning things from Israel at the expense of each other."

"We don't want to end up with separate courses rather than tracks; it would be the beginning of destructive linkages," he said.

Dr. Anani, a major player in Jordan's negotiations with Israel since the Madrid conference, said that in this course guards should be placed to avoid a situation where "there is a preface and a soldier."

Although coordination was mostly absent throughout the two years of Arab-Israeli negotiations, Dr. Anani said His Majesty's speech was especially timely because of the deadlines which have been reached by the signing of the declaration of principles (DOP) between Israel and the PLO setting specific dates for the transitional stage and the final status negotiations.

"One would ask why say it and why now, and the answer is because we don't have time — we are running out of time," Dr. Anani said.

The King's message to the PLO is, Dr. Anani said, "you should coordinate with Jordan and we better coordinate now."

He added that the King's message to the PLO was not to signal impending "divorce" but one that tried to impress on the Palestinian decisionmakers that "late coordination might be more futile than no coordination."

The lack of coordination over the past two years between the PLO and Jordan, according to Dr. Anani, has contributed to the existence of what he termed as "ill will" between the two sides.

The King, in this week's address, "sought to dispel some of the feeling of distrust that exists in Jordanian-Palestinian relations. According to Dr. Anani, the King's reference to Jerusalem's holy places and the concept of confederation were aimed at dispelling the feeling that Jordan still had designs to rule the West Bank.



Jawad Anani

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On the issue of Jerusalem, Dr. Anani said, Jordan had repeatedly explained that its insistence on safeguarding the holy places was not aimed at establishing "geographic jurisdiction but a religious one."

He explained that Jordan believes that since the issue of Jerusalem was left to final status negotiations relinquishing jurisdiction over Jerusalem's holy places may play into Israel's hand by creating a "sovereignty vacuum" during the interim period of Palestinian self-rule.

"Our move was continuously misrepresented as an attempt to overreach into the West Bank, which is untrue," Dr. Anani said.

The second issue of contention, Dr. Anani said, was the concept of a confederation between Jordan and the emerging Palestinian entity. "The King demanded that this debate be dropped completely to eliminate any suspicion that Jordan wanted to take over the PLO's role for Palestinians."

He said that the King wanted the postponement of the idea of confederation until such a time when Palestinians have achieved the right to self-determination. "It is too early to discuss when Palestinians still have no right to self-determination and could be interpreted to mean that Jordan was trying to intervene in Palestinian affairs."

The third cause of mistrust, which Dr. Anani said the King did not mention in his speech, was Jordan's intention to reopen Jordanian bank branches in the occupied territories.

"It saddens us that the framework of cooperation between us and the Palestinians has been spearheaded by the issue of banking," Dr. Anani said. "It appears (Continued on page 5)

Israelis kill 3 teenagers in Gaza

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops Monday shot and killed three Palestinian teenagers in the occupied Gaza Strip, Arab sources said.

Troops fatally shot Fadel Ibrahim Riban, 19, in the mouth after he threw stones at an army jeep patrolling the Jabalya refugee camp, while elite troops shot Abbas Khader Al Saidi, 18, in the Shatti camp, they said.

Taxi driver Ibrahim Abu Dan told AFP that he saw soldiers, who were looking for Palestinians who had fled in a Peugeot 404 car, first wounding Saidi and then finishing him off with a second shot.

Farid Chaarawi, 19, was killed by a bullet which penetrated his abdomen when Israeli soldiers opened fire in the Shatti camp at demonstrators showering them with stones.

Tension was clearly mounting in Gaza Monday night despite a curfew which takes effect every evening at 8:00 p.m. (1800 GMT), the same sources said.

These deaths bring to 1,163 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli bullets in the occupied territories since uprising erupted six years ago, according to an AFP toll.

Also on Monday, Palestinian sources here said Israeli troops have arrested two members of PLO chief Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction who are suspected of killing two Israelis last week (see page 10).



His Majesty King Hussein Monday receives Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa in a meeting attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Petra photo)

Jordan, Egypt to revitalise joint higher committee

Musa delivers Mubarak message to King, stresses need for Arab coordination

Egyptian minister backs PLO on Cairo paper

by P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa paid a brief visit to Amman Monday to deliver a message from President Hosni Mubarak to His Majesty King Hussein and discuss the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations. Mr. Musa, in arrival and departure comments to reporters, said his visit was part of Jordanian-Egyptian coordination and that Mr. Mubarak's message to the King dealt with the peace process and Cairo-Amman relations. He said he was carrying back a message from King Hussein to President Mubarak.

Both Mr. Musa and his Jordanian counterpart Talal Al Hassan also announced plans to revitalise the work of the joint Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Committee headed at prime ministers' level. The committee has not met since 1990, when conflicting positions of Jordan and Egypt over the Gulf crisis caused a strain in relations. The foreign ministers did not

announce a date for the committee's next meeting.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the King and Mr. Musa discussed the latest developments in the peace process as well as bilateral relations, and reaffirmed support for Palestinians in their effort to regain their rights.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali also held a round of talks with Mr. Musa.

As the Egyptian minister was holding the talks here, Information Minister Jawad Anani told reporters Egypt was seeking to "understand the King's position" after the comments His Majesty made Saturday calling on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to undertake immediate moves towards coordination with Jordan.

Reports from Cairo said Mr. Musa's visit to Amman had more to do with Jordanian-Egyptian relations and overall Arab relations than the strict politics of the peace process.

Arab diplomats noted that Mr. Musa's visit to Amman followed two days of talks here by the Qatari foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Al

Thani, who said after the discussions that all differences between Doha and Amman were removed and that both sides were planning to launch economic and political cooperation.

They said Egypt, "which would like to carve out a role for itself in healing Arab rifts caused by the Gulf crisis, wanted to know of the Qatari-Jordanian development."

Asked to comment on this aspect, Dr. Anani said Jordan did not mind coordinating with Egypt towards achieving Arab reconciliation, but that "Jordan could not have waited for anybody to mend fences; it had to take the lead."

On Egypt's perceived role in improving relations between Jordan and the Gulf states, Dr. Anani said: "I think (one) should ask the Gulf countries to evaluate... their links with Egypt in terms of a balanced relationship with Jordan and the Palestinians."

In arrival comments, Mr. Musa expressed hope that the year 1994 "will witness an improvement" in ties among Arab countries and stressed (Continued on page 5)

Reformists press Arafat to make PLO more democratic

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat came under new pressure Monday to stop monopolising key decisions on the peace talks with Israel and to make the organisation more democratic.

Nabil Amr, a member of the team, said the PLO chairman "displayed a high readiness to listen and argue, but made no promises" during the meeting Sunday night.

Interviewed Monday by the Associated Press, Mr. Amr said the seven man delegation proposed "a mechanism" for political reforms to allow wider participation in the decision-making process for Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories.

But he refused to elaborate on the proposal, and said more meetings will be held in the next two days with Mr. Arafat and top members of the PLO's ruling Executive Committee.

The delegation was led by Haidar Abdul Shafi, a Gaza physician who headed Palestinian negotiators to the Arab-Israeli peace process when it was launched in Madrid in October 1991. It included members of the negotiating team.

Speaking to reporters on arrival in Tunis Sunday, Dr. Abdul Shafi said: "Our main

demand is to expand the decision-making authority so that decisions are no longer made by Arafat alone. We basically want to set up a collective Palestinian leadership."

Mr. Arafat, who became chairman of the PLO in 1968, has been under increasing attack from critics who say he should change his autocratic rule and allow more democracy in the movement.

The reformists support the Sept. 13 PLO-Israeli accord for limited Palestinian self-rule. But they disagree with the way Mr. Arafat is handling negotiations with Israel for its implementation.

The agreement has been stalled by differences between the PLO and Israel over control of crossings between Jordan and Jericho and Egypt and Gaza and the physical area of the West Bank town of Jericho.

The reformists had sent a four-page memo to Mr. Arafat last month. It accused the PLO of "not doing enough to foster dialogue among the various Palestinian factions to address the opposition to the autonomy accord" and of "failing to present the accord in an objective, clear manner so that the people would know its implications..."

The memo called for special committees, including Palesti-

nians in the occupied territories and in the diaspora, to deal with the autonomy negotiations with Israel rather than leaving PLO-appointed delegates to do the job.

"We want to broaden the decision-making structure so that it does not stay entirely in Abu Ammar's (Arafat's) hands," Dr. Abdul Shafi said Sunday, adding he would call for a "collective leadership."

At least six of the 12 PLO Executive Committee members support the demands, according to a Palestinian official.

Dr. Abdul Shafi, a founding PLO member, who has for months demanded more democracy, said: "Committee appointments should not be made only on the basis of political and personal considerations."

He stressed the need to use Palestinians of ability at this "decisive" time.

Three leading figures in the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation resigned Dec. 26 in protest at Mr. Arafat's decision to name a 13-member council to head Fatah operations in the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Arafat said the resignations had stemmed from a misunderstanding and promised "serious changes will be carried out" in the Fatah leadership in Gaza.

Three months after historic deal, Arafat finds little to show

By Jack Redden
Reuter

AMMAN — Yasser Arafat has entered the New Year facing a bleak political landscape, with pressure mounting from all sides in the Middle East and even Palestinian support for his leadership draining away.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman made the biggest news of 1993 when his handshake with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin sealed a peace accord in September.

But his failure to translate it into reality leaves his future looking increasingly precarious.

Haider Abdul Shafi, chief Palestinian negotiator in the Washington talks with Israel, left Amman for Tunis Sunday to demand Mr. Arafat share power inside the PLO.

"We are not happy with the way negotiations are going," said Dr. Abdul Shafi, who has always harboured deep doubts about Mr. Arafat's September accord.

"There isn't a coherent plan," Hours earlier, King Hussein warned Mr. Arafat to conclude an agreement with Jordan on future political and economic links.

That warning followed last week's failure of talks with Israel in Cairo on implementing September's self-rule accord that marked the greatest gamble of Mr. Arafat's career.

If he had thought Israel would reward him for the accord, he seriously miscalculated. So far he has had little to show to an increasingly sceptical Palestinian public.

Only a handful of the more than 10,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails have been freed. Jewish settlement of Arab land continues unabated.

Most damaging to expectations Mr. Arafat had helped inflate, the promised Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho did not begin on Dec. 13 as prescribed in the accord.

While the PLO appears to founder, Israel has enjoyed a diplomatic bonanza since the September accord.

As Israeli-PLO talks failed in Cairo, the Vatican formally recognised Israel — long a goal of Israeli foreign policy. Tunisia, Qatar and Oman are hosting meetings on Middle East issues that will in-

clude Israeli delegates — proof of the acceptance gained by Israeli through the peace talks.

"Why do some Arabs feel embarrassed from meeting Israelis in Arab countries but they don't object to such meeting in Western states?" Qatar's foreign minister said in Amman on Sunday.

In contrast to Israel's improving ties in the Arab World, the PLO is discovering it is hard to find a friend — at least one willing to prove its sympathy with money.

FLO officials complained last week that Egypt, second on the U.S. foreign aid list only to Israel, was pressing for Mr. Arafat to accept Israeli terms for implementing the accord.

Faisal Hussein, Mr. Arafat's deputy in the occupied territories, received the same advice to make concessions during a futile fund-raising mission to Saudi Arabia last month. PLO sources reported.

ANALYSIS

Mr. Arafat has often survived by shifting and blurring to keep the fault lines of the Palestinian movement obscured. His options this time are grim. It's a no-win predicament.

Israel shows no urgency to secure Mr. Arafat agreement to the self-rule terms, with Mr. Rabin saying on Sunday his position is fixed and he will let the PLO "sweat."

If Mr. Arafat accepts terms he said were a humiliation, his dwindling prestige will take another dip — and Palestinians who condemned the accord from the start as a surrender will find fresh ammunition.

"The agreement contained the seeds of its own failure," Dr. Abdul Shafi said just before flying to a meeting with Mr. Arafat.

The septuagenarian physician from Gaza wondered if the PLO should resume its decades-old call for international intervention — more unlikely than ever in a world where the only superpower is an unreservedly pro-Israeli United States.

Only months after hopes for peace soared, Dr. Abdul Shafi, one of the most respected of Palestinians, fears it was an illusion. "All that this will boil down to is that there will be no peace."

Companies chasing Kuwait work face offset challenge

KUWAIT (R) — The golden bonanza never came for foreign companies seeking to help rebuild Kuwait after the Gulf war.

Three years on, new offset trade obligations have added to the challenge facing contractors already hit by the emirate's post-war economic downturn.

To clinch a sale, foreign firms chasing multi-million dollar deals must now reinvest part of their earnings in a local economy presenting few attractive opportunities.

Executives are racking their brains for good ideas. "If there was anything worthwhile to do, the Kuwaitis would have done it themselves years ago," said one diplomat.

"Everyone's scratching around for ideas," Under guidelines issued last year contracts with the state worth one million dinars (\$3.3 million) or more are subject to an offset obligation worth 30 per cent of the contract value.

The programme encourages foreign firms to set up joint ventures geared towards training and technology transfer. The idea is to diversify the emirate's economy away from almost total reliance on oil and foreign workers.

A report by the National Bank of Kuwait says the greatest challenge facing all parties in the offset programme will be finding adequate investment projects.

Economists point to a shrunken economy hit by continuing fears over Iraq and a 40 per cent population drop since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, sparking an exodus of Kuwaitis and foreign workers.

A U.S.-led alliance drove the Iraqis out in early 1991, giving rise to expectations of a reconstruction boom.

Analysts say the most attractive aspects of the offset plan are its unusual offshore option and the fact that a string of major firms have decided it's worth their while to sign up.

Two — America's G.M. Hughes Electronics Corp and France's Aerospatiale — have already signed memoranda of agreement.

America's Raytheon company, General Dynamics Corp and Tomcat and Britain's GKN are expected to follow suit in the first quarter of 1994, officials say.

To meet the criticism that it is difficult to identify suitable investments, Kuwaitis say they will consider permitting joint ventures registered in Kuwait to operate offshore.

If the contract value is greater than five million dinars (\$17

million) the offset project can be in Kuwait, countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council — Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates — the Arab World, or elsewhere in the world, in that order of preference.

Under the guidelines, firms signing contracts from one million to five million dinars must contribute to an offset development fund aimed at promoting private business.

"We want to get the message across that we're here to help companies make money," said a Finance Ministry official. "We know these companies are in the business of making profits."

But critics note even Kuwaitis see little promise in the moribund non-oil sectors of banking, hotels, the stock market and limited light industry. Private Kuwaiti investments continue to flow overseas.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry board member Abdul Wahhab Al Wazzan said Kuwaitis had obtained 2,000 commercial licences and invested in 25,000 properties in the United Arab Emirates since the war because of the poor business climate at home.

Diplomats add the government has been slow to point businessmen towards good opportunities.

Officials reply that learning to use personal contacts, Kuwaiti-style, is vital to discovering investment opportunities.

Private offset consultant Stefan Skrzywanek said offset could help contractors make additional profits but up to the minute knowledge of the Kuwait business scene was a key factor.

Hughes executive Robert O'Rourke said offset "certainly is a challenge."

Although foreigners are not allowed to buy into the state-owned oil firms they will be allowed to provide oil support services — one of the targets Hughes is aiming at.

Some nevertheless describe Kuwaiti offset as a trade barrier. They say it favours multinational companies able to absorb offset costs by using economies of scale and requires smaller exporters to divert precious management resources.

"It could also make firms increase their prices to cover the 30 per cent (required by offset)," one diplomat said. "If all alternative suppliers make the same calculation, the buyer will end up paying for the offset, whoever he chooses."

Belgian police hold 50 in Turk-Kurdish clashes

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — More than 50 youths carrying knives, baseball bats and petrol bombs were arrested Sunday night when about 500 Turks protesting against the presence of Kurdish "freedom marchers" in Brussels clashed with police.

It was the second successive night of trouble in the narrow streets of the city's Turkish quarter. Eleven people were hurt Saturday night, when police used a water cannon to break up fighting between Kurdish and Turkish immigrants.

"One Molotov cocktail was thrown tonight. We intervened with riot police and they dispersed. Youths smashed the windows of Kurdish shops and we think they will come back," a police spokesman told Reuters at the scene of Sunday's clashes.

Police chief Jo de Cuyper said about 160 officers were on hand and they arrested at least 500 youths. "There were about 500 altogether at one time, but they split up into smaller groups."

The Turks had tried to prevent the 150-strong group of Kurds holding a meeting in a local hall and were angered when a Kurdish flag was draped over the balcony of the building.

The Kurds were then escorted to a sports hall in another part of Brussels, where they remained on Sunday.

"The choice of the area (to hold the meeting) was not made on purpose," Timur Sayan, a member of the Union of Intellectual Patriots of Kurdistan which organised the March, told Reuters at the sports hall.

Banners around the hall said, "Stop military aid to Turkey. End illegality of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK)." "The Turks tried to discredit our march. We had no intention of posing problems to the Belgian people," Mr. Sayan added.

U.N. says Iraqis left Kuwaiti side of border

KUWAIT (R) — All the Iraqis who used to live in the Kuwaiti part of the border town of Umm Qasr have now moved to new houses on the Iraqi side, U.N. officials said Sunday.

"Since zero hour on the first of January, no more Iraqi citizens or their assets are in the residential areas of Umm Qasr on the Kuwaiti side of the border," United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) spokesman Abdul Latif Kabbaj told Reuters by telephone.

"They were evacuated to the Iraqi side of the town where they were allocated new apartments (by the Iraqi authorities)." Mr. Kabbaj said the move, which had been taking place since mid-November, was supervised by U.N. officials. The Kuwaiti authorities took over their side of Umm Qasr on Saturday.

"The Kuwaiti side of the town came under Kuwait's authority after it was inspected by the force commander of UNIKOM Major-General (Krishna) Thapa on Saturday," he said.

In 1993 a U.N. border demarcation commission, set up under Gulf war-related ceasefire resolutions, ruled that several farms, part of an oil field and a part of Umm Qasr town were on the Kuwaiti side of the border.

For years Iraq and Kuwait had used a de facto border slightly to the south of the De Jure border in places. UNIKOM said the evacuation, which started in mid-November, was "smoothly carried out without any incident." But more Iraqis have to be moved to Iraq from other Kuwaiti areas.

"Iraqi farmers are still present in the Al Abdal farms. Baghdad did not yet give a date for the beginning of the farmers' evacuation," Mr. Kabbaj said.

A United Nations envoy visited Kuwait last September to evaluate the assets of 63 Iraqi farming families separated from their land by the newly demarcated frontier.

Kuwait says it will pay U.N.-assessed compensation to the Iraqi farmers who ended up on the wrong side of the border.

Mr. Kabbaj said Kuwait stopped the digging of a security border trench because of the presence of Iraqi people and assets in Kuwaiti territories through which the trench is to be dug.

In June 1993, the emirate started digging a border trench three metres deep and five metres wide along the 207 kilometre desert border to keep out infiltrators.

"Kuwait can, if it wishes, resume digging the trench," said Mr. Kabbaj.

Iraqi forces seized Kuwait in August 1990. A multinational alliance led by the United States ejected them in February 1991.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Settlers group rejects transfer

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Jews living in an isolated settlement in the Gaza Strip Sunday rejected a proposal for them to move to a more protected area within the occupied territory. Eli Dayan, head of the Labour Party bloc in parliament, told thirty families from the Netzarim settlement that a "whole army battalion would be needed to protect them" and suggested they join Jewish settlers in Gush Katif. The Israeli news agency said the settlers rejected Mr. Dayan's proposal and pledged to stay put. Meanwhile several thousand settlers in the Jordan Valley went on strike against the threatened "isolation" of one of their settlements. Police said cars and tyres were set ablaze blocking the main road for more than an hour. Settlers demonstrated at the Arab village of Ouja, 10 kilometres north of Jericho, which would fall inside the autonomous zone under a draft document drawn up at autonomy negotiations in Cairo. Despite official denials settlers fear that would cut off Naama settlement.

Iran welcomes India-Pakistan talks

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has welcomed new talks between Pakistan and India as a move which could bring stability to the region, the official news agency IRNA reported. A Foreign Ministry spokesman told IRNA that negotiations in Islamabad could "help remove the existing tension" between the two sides and lead to restoration of peace and stability in the region. "We hope that the talks would have fruitful results," he was quoted as saying. The talks are the seventh time the two countries have met since 1990 to try to defuse over Kashmir. Iran has been strongly critical of the Indian role in Kashmir and has repeatedly offered to mediate in the conflict. But India, which accuses Pakistan of arming and training militants in Kashmir, has rejected any third-party intervention. Islamabad, which denies any involvement in Kashmir, has been open to the idea of Iranian mediation.

Iran: No contact with Greek guerrillas

NICOSIA (R) — Iran has denied allegations by an Italian newspaper that it had contacts with the November 17 group of Greek leftist guerrillas, the official Iranian IRNA news agency reported. IRNA said last Sunday that the director-general of Western European affairs at Iran's Foreign Ministry, Ali Ahani, denied that it said were recent charges in the Corriere Della Sera daily of Iranian contacts with members of November 17. The agency said he was speaking in a meeting with Greece's charge d'affaires in Tehran, Ioannis Pedeotis. November 17 has killed 19 Greeks and foreigners since 1975, increasingly using remote-controlled car-bombs and rockets.

U.S. considers parole of Pollard

NEW YORK (R) — The Clinton administration is considering the possibility of parole for Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard but is unlikely to follow through, Time magazine reported Sunday. The magazine said in a brief article which did not specify its sources that Deputy Attorney General Philip Heyman is drafting a list of compromise options for Mr. Pollard, whom Israel wants freed. The list reportedly includes the possibility of a reduced sentence that would make him eligible for parole in a few months. The magazine added, however, that the list may only be a ploy that would allow Mr. Clinton to reassure Israel he considered all options in the case. Mr. Pollard, a former navy intelligence analyst, has pleaded guilty to spying for Israel. A federal judge gave him the maximum possible sentence of life in prison. Mr. Pollard, in jail since his arrest outside the Israeli embassy in 1985, has filed a request with the U.S. Pardon Office, part of the Justice Department, to have his sentence shortened to the amount of time already served. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin urged Mr. Clinton at a White House meeting in November to pardon Mr. Pollard.

Saudi prince in Morocco on private visit

RABAT (AFP) — Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz arrived in Casablanca Sunday evening for a private visit during which he is due to meet Morocco's King Hassan II. Prince Abdullah, who is also deputy prime minister and commander of the National Guard, was welcomed by a number of officials, including Driss Slaoui, an advisor to the Moroccan monarch. The private visit is scheduled to last a few days. Prince Abdullah makes regular trips to Morocco, where the Saudi royal family owns a number of residences.

European tourists drown off Algerian coast

ALGIERS (AFP) — The bodies of three drowned holidaymakers, including two Spanish men, have been washed up by the sea in the Oran region of western Algeria, consular officials said Monday. It had not yet been possible to identify one of the corpses, which were found on the shore last Thursday, but it was believed also to be that of a European, the officials said. The three men had been on board the yacht Pajamar II, which last docked at the Portuguese harbour of Porto Figuera da Foz on Dec. 20. The boat left its home port in the Galicia region of Spain on Dec. 15, for an undisclosed destination.

Cypriot drowns after saving holidaymaker

NICOSIA (AFP) A Cypriot rescued an elderly British holidaymaker from the sea off this Mediterranean island but then drowned himself as his family watched in horror, the Cyprus News Agency reported Monday. It said Neophytos Antoniou, a 34-year-old civil aviation worker, died Sunday in the southeast tourist resort of Ayia Napa after he was swept out by huge waves and probably struck the rocks. William Charles Eric Roberts was saved with the help of a rope brought to him by Mr. Antoniou who tore off his clothes and jumped in to save the 61-year-old building contractor who was in trouble in rough seas. Mr. Antoniou's wife and two small children, on the beach for a stroll to enjoy the winter sunshine, watched helplessly as he was swept out after a half-hour operation to save Mr. Roberts.

Iraq archaeologists restore glory of ancient capital

By Jane Arraf
Reuters

SAMARRA, Iraq — Iraqi legend has it that a woman flung her black cloak from the top of the spiral minaret in this ancient capital of the caliphs will find true love — or at least a husband.

These days there are few love-lorn visitors climbing the twisting steps of the Al Malwiya minaret. But Iraqi archaeologists are carrying on a lonely fight to restore the treasures of what was for a moment in history the centre of the Islamic World.

They hope that a lifting of Gulf war trade sanctions on Iraq will free more funds for excavation and bring back a rush of foreign pilgrims to the uncovered riches of the ninth century capital of the Islamic caliphate.

Workers this year built a stone ramp to the spiral tower and repaired the minaret's 361 winding steps which bring worshipers seven storeys closer to paradise.

Across the road, archaeologists are reconstructing the caliph's swimming pool, a two-storey complex which was one of the glories of a city famed for its palaces. 30-kilometre long boulevards and gardens stretching along the Tigris River.

The centrepiece of the complex, a round 63-square-metre pool originally tiled with marble and surrounded by gilded glass mosaics, was fed by underground channels from the Tigris.

The three-metre deep pool has long been stripped of its marble but remains a testament to the ingenuity and opulence to one of the most spectacular cities of antiquity.

"When it was first discovered by a German team in the 1920s, they thought it was an amphitheatre," said project director Hafeth Hussein Al Hayani, from the Iraqi department of Antiquities.

Iraqi archaeologists began their own excavation and restoration more than six decades later in 1988.

New low-like stone panels carved with leaves and grapes are almost indistinguishable from delicate fragments of the original walls. New bricks fired the same way they were 12 centuries ago have restored collapsed corridors.

The city was so spectacular that caliph Al Mutasim renamed it Sur'a-Manra'a (he who sees it rejoices) after he moved the capital of the caliphate there from Baghdad in 836 amid fighting between

local residents and Turkish troops.

Sixty years later, when fighting had been quelled, the capital was moved back to Baghdad — at the time a centre of world advances in art and sciences. Samarra declined and by the 1300s was mostly in ruins.

Throughout modern Iraq, the pace of excavation has almost ground to a halt because the government has been left strapped for cash by the Gulf war.

American fighter planes reinforcing the "no-fly" zone in northern Iraq roared overhead as workers erect scaffolding to plaster cracks in the ruins. Mr. Hayani said these were caused by vibrations from bombing raids, when U.S.-led allies attacked Iraq in 1991 in a war to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 75111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Le Chateau Des Oliviers
19:00	News in French
19:15	Varieties
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Respected Family
21:10	Man And The Machine
22:00	News in English
22:20	Cape Rebel
23:10	Night Court
PRAYER TIMES	
05:10	Fajr
07:30	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:40	Dhuhr
14:25	Asr
16:48	Maghrib
18:11	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Marys of Nazareth Church Swetich, Tel. 801540	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 601757	
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622266	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 63851, Tel. 62543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 71131	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 71751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624258	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 624032	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
The Kingdom will be affected by a depression accompanied by a cold air mass, cloudy will be cloudy to partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers in all parts of the country and winds will be northerly active. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers, winds will be southerly active and seas rough.	
Min./Max. temp. 5/11	
Aqaba 9/18	
Djersa 3/14	
Jordan Valley 11/19	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 55 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.	Khalid pharmacy 965417
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi	794708
Dr. Khalid Al Jwayh	745749
Dr. Mohammad Omeran	612232
Dr. Salah Al Usud	641028
Firas pharmacy	636730
Redwood pharmacy	773036
Al Asadna pharmacy	637055
Nairoba pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shemsan pharmacy	637661
Nairoba pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	647632
TRBID:	
Dr. Fayez Al Qadi	248-43
Alquds pharmacy	1-1
ZARQA:	
Dr. Yousef Abu Sa'd	999000
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	107711
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue	630041
Civil Defence Emergency	109
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	801299
Blind Aid	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	806391
Public Security Department	63021
Hotel Complaints	615870
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints	877467
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	0102301
Central Amman Telephone Repairs	623100
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773211
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	640100
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/3732
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642816/6
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642816/6
Jabal Amman Maternity	642816/6
Mathers, J. Amman	636140
Pakistan, Shamsan	664171/4
Shamsan Hospital	669131
University Hospital	645845
Al-Muhsin Hospital	667222/4
The Islamic, Abdali	664127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664146/6
Al-Muhsin, J. Ashraf	775111/2
Army, Marka	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	686100
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	019183323
Zarqa National Hospital	019183323
Al-Sina Hospital	019183323
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital	019183323
IBRD:	
Process Basma Hospital	102127855
Greek Catholic	

Leftist parties criticise budget

By Suhair Obeidat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Six leftist political parties Monday criticised the JD 1.487 billion draft budget for 1994 and called on the Lower House of Parliament to reject it.

A joint statement issued by the six said the draft budget, which is under study by the Finance Committee of the House, placed the greater burden of economic reform on the poor, and thus deepened the gap between the rich and poor.

The statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordanian Communist Party, the Communist Arab Party, the Jordanian Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian Democratic People's Party (Hashd), the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party and the Jordanian Democratic Arab Party.

It called on the House to reject the draft budget, presented to parliament in mid-December by Finance Minister Sami Gammoh, and "defend the people's right to their daily bread."

Listing its own version of the objectives of the country's economic policy, the statement said that economic development in the past two years did not justify the increase in local revenues (mainly from indirect taxes and fees).

The statement asserted that the expected introduction of a sales tax would "increase the production costs of the local industries and lead to a general price increase in market, and raise the poverty line."

Other byproducts of the sales tax, according to the statement, will be a decline in demand for local products and investment and an increase in unemployment.

The statement called for a link between prices and wages and a minimum level of wages "in accordance with all related studies of living costs and the poverty line."

It claimed that the increase in the income and profit taxes came mainly from shareholding companies and employees, "which indicates that the percentage of tax invasion is still very high."

On expenditure, the statement claims that there is no serious attempt to reduce the deficit by decreasing expenditure, "rather it is about increasing revenues while maintaining the level of expenditure."

The statement said that the budget is not "deficit-free" as described by Mr. Gammoh, but that there is a deficit of JD 450 million "to be covered by local and foreign aid and loans."

The statement concluded by some suggestions to "treat the economic situation and the budget, including an increase in the salaries of active and retired civil servants and the military."

In his daily column which appeared in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i Monday, economist Fahd Al Fanek accused those advocating an increase in salaries as being "irresponsible."

He said that there is no guarantee that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will reschedule Jordan's debts "regardless of our adherence to the economic reform programme, which includes decreasing the budget deficit."

RJ, Gulf Air sign maintenance agreement

AMMAN (J.T.) — Gulf Air has joined other Arab and foreign airlines in acquiring maintenance of its engines at the Royal Jordanian (RJ) technical workshop at the queen Abla International Airport in Amman.

Gulf Air, owned by Arab Gulf countries, RJ Monday signed a deal for the maintenance of two engines used by the Gulf Air Boeing 737 aircraft. By workshop has been providing such service to various aircraft owned by Arab and foreign airlines.

The deal was signed by RJ Vice President Zeid Kilani and Gulf Air Deputy Director Ahmad Abdul Ghani.



His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Monday Mr. Jonathan Atkin, British minister of state for defence affairs. They exchanged views about regional and international affairs. Later (below) the King received Amina Al Hafez, former Lebanese prime minister who is on a current visit to Jordan.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Crown Prince visits army unit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday visited the Third Jordanian Protection Regiment and was briefed on the training practices the members currently undergo. The Crown Prince was accompanied by the chief of staff of the Royal ground forces, the inspector general, and the commander of the Third Royal Armoured Division. This unit is about to finish its training programme in preparation for Jordanian units currently serving in the U.N. peacekeeping force in the former Yugoslavia.

Prince Faisal visits youth ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein Monday visited the youth ministry where he met with Youth Minister Abdullah Oweidat and several ministry officials. Prince Faisal and Dr. Oweidat discussed issues related to sports and youth movements in Jordan and means of developing them. The two also dwelt on car racing and gliding, with Prince Faisal expressing his keen interest in supporting these sports to enable Jordan to compete with other countries at the international level.

Masri meets Kuwaiti envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Al Masri Monday received the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires in Amman, Mr. Masri and the Kuwaiti envoy discussed Jordanian-Kuwaiti relations and issues of common interest.

Supply minister meets Karak businessmen

KARAK (Petra) — Supply Minister Radhi Ibrahim Monday stressed the Ministry of Supply's keenness to improve the services it offers to citizens in the Karak governorate and to solve all supply-related issues facing merchants and animal breeders in the governorate. In a meeting with several animal breeders and the presidents of the Karak and Mazar chambers of commerce in the presence of Karak Governor Khalaf Al Mahasneh, Mr. Ibrahim said the ministry has agreed with a share holding company to establish a poultry slaughter house, refrigerated warehouses and fodder plants to Karak, Aqaba and Irbid at a total cost of JD 10 million. The minister said the ministry will establish a grains mill and warehouse in cooperation with local investors. He pointed out that there was a study prepared by the cement, potash and phosphate companies in the southern parts of Jordan to establish a holding company which would launch several industrial ventures.

Land revenues increase

AMMAN (Petra) — The revenues of the Lands and Survey Department in December have totalled JD 4,868,842, reflecting an increase of 31 per cent over the department's revenues in November, according to department director general Ali Al Gharibeh. Mr. Gharibeh said the department's December revenues also witnessed an increase of four per cent compared to the same month in 1992. The total of the department's revenues in 1993 as a whole witnessed an increase of 11 per cent compared to 1992. Mr. Gharibeh said. The 1993 revenues reached JD 59,023,163 while the 1992 revenues totalled JD 53,162,918, he said.

Kamal becomes Yarmouk president

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Monday approving the appointment of Marwan Kamal as president of Yarmouk University. Dr. Kamal commenced his work as university president Monday morning.

Labour committee reviews action plan

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Labour's planning committee Monday discussed the outcome of recent field visits paid by several of its department heads to the ministry's labour and employment offices in Irbid, Salt, Ramtha, Tafleh, South Shouneh, Madaba, Sabab, Zarqa, Jerash and Mafrq. In a meeting which was chaired by Labour Minister Khaled Eghzawi and attended by department directors, a discussion took place on means of developing the ministry's work mechanisms in light of these visits and recommendations issued by department directors.

Hlass named acting secretary general of Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Laurice Hlass, a senior official at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, has been appointed acting secretary general of the ministry, pending the appointment of a permanent secretary, it was announced Sunday.

Ms. Hlass, who was named as Jordan's first woman ambassador in 1970, is a strong contender for the secretary general's position, which was left vacant by the retirement of Mr. Nasri Atallah who had occupied it for several years.

The Council of Ministers is expected to act on the appointment soon, and if Ms. Hlass is chosen for the job, she will be the first woman secretary general of a ministry in the history of Jordan.

NAF needs more funds

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Aid Fund (NAF) has issued an appeal to the government to increase the amount earmarked for it this year to deal with the problem of abject poverty in Jordan.

According to 1994 budget figures, allocation to NAF amounts to JD 13 million but an additional JD 5 million are at least needed to meet the basic requirements of the very needy people, said acting NAF Director Jihad Majali.

Quoting figures included in several poverty studies, prepared by a special committee entrusted for this task by the prime ministry, 5.5 per cent of the country's population of nearly four million citizens now live under the abject poverty line, defined as living on an income of up to JD69, said Mr. Majali Monday.

He noted that sectors living at or below the absolute poverty line, defined as those sectors who earn a monthly income of JD 119 and less, account for at least 21.1 per cent of the population.

Mr. Majali said the people living within the abject poverty bracket were estimated at 214,500 individuals noting that Jordanian families, on the average, were each composed of 7.2 members and that 30,203 family heads receive monthly aid.

According to Mr. Majali the government had fixed the ceiling of aid at JD 50 per family in 1992, up from JD 40 in previous years.

"We hope the government would allocate additional funds to enable the NAF to raise the monthly assistance to JD 60 this year," Mr. Majali said.

Referring to vocational training for heads of poor families to enable them to earn a living, Mr. Majali said NAF, which was established in 1987, has been providing loans amounting to JD5,547,944 for vocational training purposes.

He said that 4,218 projects were set up by poor families with these loans until now.

Noting that 66 per cent of these projects were successful, Mr. Majali said that the beneficiaries were no longer in need of the NAF financial aid.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Art exhibition by Sudanese artist Abdul Qadir Al Bakhit at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by artist Sadik Kwaish entitled "Talisma" at Baladna Art Gallery.
- Art exhibition by Jordanian artist Suba Mash'al at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Abdul Jabbar Salman oo bedouin culture at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition on the 100th anniversary of the death of French novelist Guy De Maupassant at the Frech Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition of Iraqi books at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by a number of Jordanian artists entitled "The Sixth Exhibition - Samples From The Contemporary Jordanian Art 93" at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition "Prints and Drawings of Fakhrulissa Zeid" (1915-1991) until the 15th of January '94 at Darat al Fuqun of the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation. Also showing the "Permanent" Exhibition. (Tel. 643251/2).

DRAMA

- Drama for children entitled "The Question" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 11:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

POETRY RECITAL

- Poetry recital by poets Dr. Abdul Rahman Maqan, Dr. Zakariya Dawoud, Adib Al Khayat, and Faisal Abdul Khaliq at the Arab Club for Culture and Art in Dahiyat Al Rasheed at 6:30 p.m.

Ministry of Interior prepares for national conference on safety

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Interior announced Monday that it is preparing for a national conference, to be held before the end of this month to deal with matters related to public safety for citizens as well private and public sector buildings and installations.

The ministry said in a statement that holding the conference, which comes in response to directives by His Royal Highness Crown Prince, would involve the participation of a number of ministries and private and public sector institutions.

Interior Minister Salameh

Hammad has already circulated invitations to the concerned parties to prepare and deliver working papers to the ministry before Jan. 15, noting that a date and a venue for the conference would be decided in the light of the replies.

The statement said that the conference would tackle a number of issues pertaining to public safety and protection, creating a national legislation for self-protection in various installations, the introduction of subjects related to fires and rescue work in school curricula, setting up courses at Jordanian universities related fighting off fires and outlining a

comprehensive media plan to promote awareness among the public about measures for safety.

It added that the discussions would cover the role of municipalities in attaining public safety and the question of meeting the requirements of public safety in industrial cities, control and inspection on precautionary and safety measures taken in the buildings and factories, disposal of dangerous waste in addition to dealing with matters related to chemical industries.

Moreover, the role of private institutions in highlighting the concept of public safety

among workers, and the role of the civil defence department in coordinating rescue and relief operations in times of catastrophes will be covered.

According to the statement, the working papers will depict the role of the interior ministry in matters related to the role of provincial governors and other ministries in dealing with matters related to environmental pollution and in providing basic requirements to fight off pollution in general as well as advising the public on matters related to the use of pesticides in controlling imported food stuff at the seaport of Aqaba and Jordanian airports.

Princess Basma urges women to implement action plan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Monday urged the Jordanian National Committee for Women (JNCW) to implement the committee's plan of action soon as possible.

The princess told the committee members at a meeting that the JNCW should closely cooperate with the various private and public institutions to achieve the aspired goals. The JNCW, whose strategy includes a special clause for the action plan for social action for women, was endorsed by the Council of Ministers last October.

The JNCW, which came into being in 1992, aims at establishing a constructive dialogue among intellectuals and other sectors concerned with issues of development on the one hand and emphasising the contribution of women in tackling the various issues facing the country, on the other.

After discussions of the plan, the JNCW issued a statement noting that a decision has been taken to set up a sub-committee to put the plan into force and to embark on the preliminary work for its implementation according to priorities.

The committee also decided to approach the government to give priority in appointment in government posts to women who bear the responsibility for their families.

The plan calls for efforts to be made by the committee members to request schools and community colleges to include concepts about social development in their curricula and urges the production of media programmes designed to enhance sound social concepts and practices especially in relation to women.

According to the JNCW plan, there will be serious efforts to enhance the role of health workers, especially in the mother and child care and to ensure equal treatment for women who head families on

similar footing with males at various government institutions.

The plan entails several other provisions for helping poor women, removing obstacles before women's work, and end violence against women.

The JNCW strategy is characterised by being the result of different studies.

To ensure adequate representation of all parties concerned, the JNCW board comprises the ministers of planning, labour and social development as well as the General Secretary of the Ministry of Education Representatives from the Noor Al Hussein Foundation, Civil Service Commission, the private sector, the General Federation of Jordanian Women representatives of women in the public, and academic and private sectors.

Abu Nuwwar meets Algerian envoy

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister Maan Abu Nuwwar Monday received in his office Algerian ambassador to Jordan Al Hashemi Al Qaddouri. Dr. Abu Nuwwar and Mr. Al Qaddouri discussed Jordanian-Algerian relations and means of enhancing them.

JTV apologises for offensive programme

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan Television (JTV) was still receiving complaints from its audience yesterday because it aired a children programme Saturday in which "God" was depicted on the screen for four minutes, JTV officials said.

In a children's cartoon programmes broadcast Saturday afternoon, "God" appeared talking to children "in a way

that is inconsistent with our religious beliefs," a JTV official said.

JTV Director Ibrahim Shahzadeh told the Jordan Times that JTV receives some similar programmes that are in "total contradiction with our traditions and beliefs that we do not broadcast."

Mr. Shahzadeh said that JTV apologises to its audience for a "purely technical mistake."

He explained that the pro-

ducer at the time of broadcasting made a mistake by confusing this programme with another one on the same cassette. However, the four-minute programme was not cut immediately but was presented in full.

Mr. Shahzadeh said that the first reaction came from JTV staff who were monitoring the broadcast and was followed by the public who voiced their objection to the broadcasting of such a programme.

Jubilee School — creativity in teaching

By Ica Wabbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In keeping with the belief that the teacher is the most important single factor in making success of the teaching process, the Jubilee School for gifted students is holding an eight-day workshop under the supervision of American education consultant Charles Eilber.

Former founding director of North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, the first state-sponsored, residential school in the U.S. and "in the world for gifted, talented students," Mr. Eilber is steering the workshop, for teachers from the Jubilee School itself and from UNRWA, military, Salt pioneer centre and public schools of the Ministry of Education.

Operational since September 1993, only four months into the scholastic year, the school "is already a model and a training centre which shares training opportunities," according to Mr. Eilber.

The workshop, as the entire creed of the school, holds it that students have to get away from rote memorisation and teachers should be helped "develop ways of having students think more broadly while using interdisciplinary methods."

Putting his experience with the N. Carolina school into practice, Mr. Eilber seems eager to help teachers "develop good ways for students to ask questions, learn to expand on the topic we are talking about."

The school, according to its director, Dr. Fathi Jarwan, is striving to keep a delicate balance between traditional and modern, between old precepts and modern techniques of teaching.

The school still teaches according to the Ministry of

Education curricula, but has "modified and developed them to satisfy the needs of gifted students."

The Jubilee School believes that "gifted and talented students represent a national wealth which is vital for the future, security and prosperity of our Jordanian society and if these special abilities are not identified, nurtured and developed during the primary and secondary scholastic year, the community will lose the primary source of its progress and prosperity."

Students are selected according to certain criteria and in different stages. The criteria include school achievement over the last five semesters, behavioural characteristics, general mental ability, essay writing and personal interview.

The stages include recruitment, applications and nominations, testing, data synthesis, selection of semi-finalists, interview, selection of finalists and alternates and appealing, which gives students that had not been chosen the chance to appeal.

Eighty-nine students have been selected for this scholastic year. The school resisted the idea of giving equal shares to girls and boys, deciding instead to go for the test results. The end result was 51 boys and 38 girls admitted.

"We try to be objective, to accept students based only on their academic performance, regardless of the geographic factor, of gender, of the public or private authority," said Dr. Jarwan, mentioning that future projects include accepting students from the provinces once the new building (by the Jordan University) is built and accommodation can be provided to the pupils.

The full capacity of the school is 360 to 400 places. The



Charles Eilber holding a workshop on teaching gifted students (photo by Rana Hussein)

scholarship programme is, according to Dr. Jarwan, one way to be fair to students who are from deprived communities.

The scholarships are raised by parents, national and international institutions and private individuals.

The selection process starts in the eighth grade. This year's students were selected from a population of around forty thousand eighth graders registered in the Greater Amman area.

As challenging as having to adjust to the new academic and social realities is, the school "creates a democratic education environment where everybody is respected for himself, as a human being, and where students from different economic backgrounds compete with themselves first and with the others," for excellence, said Dr. Jarwan.

To match this "community of scholars," as the director proudly calls it, a careful selection process is carried out for picking teachers that have to be "flexible, open-minded and ready to change" and have to be able to earn the respect of students with high IQs and inquisitive minds.

"We are doing a major surgery to the whole education

system, to the instructional, evaluation and assessment technique and curricula. If the education reform has to progress, they should start with teachers, then the administrators," said Dr. Jarwan, a man of many years of experience in teaching in Jordan and abroad.

An assessment of the school's performance is still early. One thing that the director sees different in his school from others he worked in before, is that "students come back to school during holidays and at night. They like to work and once involved, it is difficult to remove them from what they are doing."

If teachers were delegated abroad to specialise in the field of gifted education and be able to cope with their charges, parents might find themselves in a fix when faced with extra smart kids.

In order to help parents cope with their prodigious progenies the school provides them with counselling. After all, children know already what they want and have strong motivation to be in this school.

In a few years' time, when they will have been armed with an independent mechanism of thinking and working, these teens are indeed going to be an asset to their society.

Jordan Times

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Logic island in Gulf

SOME ARAB Gulf countries still think that Jordan's quest for Arab reconciliation and unity of ranks is propelled by the Kingdom's need of economic aid and financial assistance. For this reason, it seems, the leaders of those countries demand that Jordan apologise for the stand it took during the Gulf war. Jordan, meanwhile, does not dismiss that it has direct national interests to reconcile with the Gulf countries. But Jordan reminds its Arab brothers that it took the stand it did in 1990 fully aware that it was the only principled and sound position we could take. Now, three and a half years after the eruption of the crisis, Jordan has been vindicated for taking that stance. Notwithstanding the Iraqi leadership's blunder of occupying Kuwait, which Jordan rejected totally, what followed was a blow to the nation, to those who allied themselves against Iraq and to those who failed to convince the others of the soundness of an Arab resolution to the conflict. Jordan, the Palestinians and Yemen included. But while the Palestinians continue to grapple with a formidable enemy — Israel — and Yemen with its internal enemies — tribalism and internal divisions — Jordan continues to build and progress despite all the difficulties and without any assistance from our rich brothers in the Gulf.

Meanwhile Saudi Arabia, the Arab leader of the international alliance led by the U.S. which opted for a military, non-Arab solution to the conflict in the Gulf, is at last feeling the pinch of paying for the cost of the war. What Jordan sought at the outset of the crisis between Kuwait and Iraq was an Arab solution to the problem. Had that option been the day then, the Arabs would have been spared most of the cost of that war, both on the political and economic levels.

At the moment, the nation stands to lose even more because neither of its components, whether Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Syria, will measure up on its own to the three non-Arab powers in the region, Iran, Israel and Turkey. Only through their collective strength could the Arab countries be able to protect their interests in the Gulf, the Mediterranean or Palestine.

But not all Arab countries of the Gulf interpret Jordan's stand in 1990 and 1991 in strictly negative terms. Take, for example, the model that Qatar is trying to set for the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, save for Oman and maybe also the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Qatar has taken the initiative to close Arab ranks by going as far as mending fences with Iraq itself. Although the Qatari foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jasssem Al Thani, who ended a visit to Jordan Sunday, sees Arab reconciliation as in need of "time and will take place in stages before Arabs can sit down at one table again and start a frank dialogue," his and his country's courage might set the example for the others to follow.

Qatar, Jordan, Yemen and the United Arab Emirates are certainly not the strongest nor the richest Arab countries, but at least they see salvation in unity, and they are right.

PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON King Hussein's speech to a group of senior army officers two days ago Al Dustour daily newspaper said that there is no alternative to close Palestinian-Jordanian coordination in the course of working together to attain the agreed peace. Jordanians and Palestinians are brothers with the same goals, having lived together for decades and having together pursued serious efforts towards regaining usurped Arab rights and lands, especially the Holy City of Jerusalem, said the paper. For its part, Jordan has been totally committed to a comprehensive settlement and has been working hard to back the PLO at all levels in the international arena, continued the paper. Therefore, close coordination efforts are the only solution at this stage and before the two sides can take further steps in this respect, it added. The two sides, suggested the paper, should now transcend the nice courtesy talk and move on by tackling practical steps towards charting a new formula for their bilateral relationship in the future. Priorities come first in the joint efforts and solidarity should characterise the relationship between the two sides as they approach the critical stage in their dealings with the Israelis, it added. The paper said that the Jordanians and Palestinians should work out a formula that would save the Jordanian and Palestinian people further sufferings and that the Palestinian-Jordanian interests can be protected.

A WRITER in Al Rai discussed the visit to Jordan by Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Jasssem Al Thani by describing it as a landmark in the Jordanian-Qatari relations and a very positive element in advancing Gulf Arab state's relations with Jordan. Muhammad Rimawi said the visit bears an indication that the leaders of the two countries are determined to pursue efforts for ending inter-Arab differences, said the writer. Qatar has succeeded in its efforts within the Gulf states to dedicate its efforts to maintaining good relations with other Arab countries, and has succeeded in charting its own independent policies in the Arab World benefiting from the lessons of the past, said Rimawi. He said Qatar hopes that bilateral contacts and efforts will not only improve its own relations with the other Arab countries but also to bring about better relations in the other Arab states themselves. For its part, and in response to Qatar's mediation efforts, Jordan has clearly showed its readiness to meet the other Arab countries half way, Rimawi continued. The writer said one can only pay tribute to the minister's endeavours at the political level.



When you appease fascism

By Anthony Lewis

BOSTON — A spectre is haunting Europe — the spectre of extreme nationalism. When it appeared two years ago, in Serbia, the United States and Western Europe decided not to treat it as a serious threat. They followed a policy of appeasement, a wheedling diplomacy that rewarded Serbian aggression.

Now the spectre is before us in a form not so easy to ignore: the strong showing in the Russian legislative elections of the party headed by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. He campaigned as an extreme nationalist and anti-Semite, calling for restoration of the Russian empire and the use of nuclear weapons if needed.

Menacing as Mr. Zhirinovskiy is, the instinctive reaction in the West has again been to dismiss the threat. President Bill Clinton said the support for him was "primarily a protest vote" by people who did not know what they were voting for. Some commentators said America should not dignify him by taking him seriously.

How little history means to Americans. If they had more sense of the past, they would not so easily wish away Mr. Zhirinovskiy or the phenomenon that he represents, extreme nationalism.

People did not take Mussolini seriously at first, or even Hitler. Underneath all the

foaming rhetoric, Hitler was just a silly little man, wasn't he? And besides, the Germans were a cultured people who would never let him carry out his barbaric threats.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy and his party are not something to be ignored or wished away. Their electoral triumph is the most dangerous development in Europe in a long time. On even the most cautious view of the implications, it overturns some basic premises of western foreign policy.

The Clinton administration, single-minded in its support of President Boris Yeltsin, encouraged him in his decision to confront and finally dismiss the old parliament. The legislators with whom he now must deal will be far worse.

Even with the great presidential power in his new constitution, Mr. Yeltsin will have a hard time holding to a policy of close cooperation with the United States. He will have to make gestures to the ultranationalist mood. The American vision of a Partnership for Peace is as good as dead.

The administration, rightly concerned about nuclear proliferation, has focused on persuading Ukraine to give up the nuclear weapons it inherited from the Soviet Union. Given Mr. Zhirinovskiy's threats, can anyone believe that Ukraine will do so now?

The administration has promised President Yeltsin

major financial support for his economic reform effort. After Mr. Zhirinovskiy's election showing, will Congress vote that aid?

History — the history of the 1930s — is all too relevant in another way. It shows how extreme nationalism can start in one country and then spread its evil when democracies fail to resist.

"Menacing as Mr. Zhirinovskiy is, the instinctive reaction in the West has again been to dismiss the threat. Mr. Zhirinovskiy and his party are not something to be ignored or wished away. Their electoral triumph is the most dangerous development in Europe in a long time."

Mussolini's Fascist Italy seized Ethiopia in 1935. The world dithered: Britain and France did nothing to resist. That capitulation encouraged Hitler to begin his aggression. When Hitler demanded dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1938, Britain and France gave way at Munich. Prime

Minister Neville Chamberlain said Britain had no interest in "a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing." Next came the attack on Poland, and World War II.

To recall that history is to realise the deadly parallel with recent events. For again we have seen what happens when a fascist takes power: this time Slobodan Milosevic in Serbia. Using nationalist demagoguery, he led Serbs to military aggression and genocide. And again the West failed to resist.

"Why should we care what happens in the Balkans?" Many Americans have asked that during the last two years, as Bosnia was dismembered. Can there be any doubt about the answer now?

In these two years we have seen the rise of neofascist gangs in Germany and the near victory of neofascist candidates in Italian municipal elections. West European societies are strong enough to deal with those threats, we believe. But Russia?

The spectre could and should have been dispelled in Serbia. A firm western policy — the policy that Margaret Thatcher would have followed if she had been in office — would have stopped Mr. Milosevic, and discouraged the spread of nationalist extremism that now confronts us with Vladimir Zhirinovskiy — The New York Times.

The courage to build and reform

By Akram A. Baker

HAMBURG — The agreement signed Sept. 13 between Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel signaled the beginning of a new era between two peoples, two dire enemies. Much has been said and written about whether the agreement will succeed or whether it will collapse like a house of cards in a strong wind. Looking at the recent violence, it would appear yet again that any attempt at peacemaking in the volatile Middle East is destined to fail.

But I do not believe that the level of violence in the occupied territories is the true barometer of success or failure. What we must be looking for is what the Palestinians themselves are doing to build their state.

In itself, the declaration of principle signed in Washington is neither liberation, as some would argue, nor sellout, as the opposition (both Palestinian and Israeli) would have us believe. What it is depends on what the Palestinian people and leadership make of it.

If the Palestinian national movement, as embodied by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, is able to transform itself from a liberation movement into an efficient representative government, it will bring salvation. If not, it will lead to disaster.

The Palestinian people have suffered and sacrificed too much to settle for a flag, a passport and a soccer team. What they need and deserve is a state that will protect their legitimate political, civil, human and social rights; a state based on equality, pluralism, the rule of law and secularism.

What should be done to achieve this goal? There are some basic steps which should be taken regardless of where the negotiating process happens to stand at the moment. First, Palestinian national institutions — for education, health care and national insurance, to name a few — must be established and developed. Corrupt and unwieldy institutions and organisations (which are rampant in the occupied territories and in the Palestinian diaspora) must be reformed or shut down.

The PLO itself is in great need of serious reforms. Political cadres, civil servants and bureaucrats must be trained. The security forces

must have the respect for human rights drilled into them. An important question is where our future police cadets are to be trained. I do not believe that Israel or the Arab states should instruct our police. A better alternative would be the European countries, and especially Scandinavian nations.

Second, economic planning must move out of first gear (where we are now) and into practical issues. Regardless of what economic system we ultimately choose, some things can be done immediately, such as ending the self-destructive and self-defeating commercial strikes. The local economy needs to be nurtured, not buried. A national economy, encompassing all sectors and from the bottom up, on solid foundations. Small industries, foreign investment, an open market, and self-reliance should be the buzzwords of today. Corruption needs to be ruthlessly uprooted. Independent monitors and auditors should be brought in to oversee all spending. This is necessary if we are to regain the people's confidence in the financial policies of their leaders.

All of this does not excuse the Israelis of their responsibilities either. There must be no bunting of "wanted" Palestinians by the Israeli military. We need more goodwill and fewer funerals. A full pardon of all people convicted of crimes or acts of political violence committed during the occupation would reduce the level of strife immediately. If we are to turn a page to history, we need to forgive, if not forget.

Mr. Arafat will need more courage to reform the Palestinian national movement, and himself, than he showed in offering his hand to his Israeli enemy that fine autumn day in Washington. But I feel optimistic. There are highly capable, competent and efficient minds among the Palestinian people, both within and outside the PLO, who can propel this horrific conflict out of the darkness and into the light of the future.

The writer, a former adviser to Faisal Husseini, who headed the Palestinian peace talks delegation, is currently studying in Hamburg. This article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

'Velvet divorce' brought gain to Czechs, pain to Slovaks

By Bernd Debusmann
Reuters

PRAGUE — A year after Czechoslovakia split into two, the Czech Republic's star is shining brightly while Slovakia's is flickering and faltering.

The former partners in the Czechoslovak federation share one remarkable achievement: They avoided the strife and bloodshed that engulfed many of the new republics that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet empire.

"Apart from that, the two states are a study in contrasts," said a European ambassador who monitors both. "The Czechs are doing well, the Slovaks are in a mess."

Such views are widely shared in the international financial community, which has given high marks to the free market reforms and conservative policies of Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus.

The Czech Republic has become the only country in the former Warsaw Pact to receive a good credit rating from Moody's, an international agency that assesses credit risk.

"The Czech Republic has the best development potential of all countries in Eastern Europe," said a report by Germany's Deutsche Bank.

"The Czech Republic is on the right track," echoed Hans Tietmeyer, president of Germany's Central Bank.

Czech economic achievements — reflected by rapid privatisation, low unemployment and a stable currency — have been underpinned by political stability.

The government enjoys wide support from a population which admires Mr. Klaus's style of leadership and his hardship as a consequence of economic reform.

An opinion poll showed that 52 per cent of Czechs wanted to be led "with a firm hand." According to another survey, three out of four Czechs accept unemployment as a price for economic transformation.

This combines with domestic tranquility unusual in Eastern Europe.

In contrast to the Czech Republic's stability, Slovakia has stumbled from one political crisis to another.

Since Czechoslovakia was replaced by two separate states on January 1, the government of Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar has been shaken by a series of dismissals, resignations, defections and policy disputes.

Independent Slovakia is on its third economy minister and its second foreign minister.

There has been no minister of privatisation, an important job in a country in transition, since Lubomir Dolgos resigned in June saying the government did not support free market reforms.

Political opponents and foreign diplomats blame the turmoil mostly on Mr. Meciar, a pugnacious ex-boxer whose popularity has fallen to less than 20 per cent from 60 at the height of the 1992 campaign for Slovak independence which led to partition.

Mr. Meciar's domestic and foreign critics accuse him of being insensitive to the rights of Slovakia's gypsy and Hungarian minorities and of provoking disputes with neighbouring Hungary.

Less than a month before the first anniversary of the Czechoslovak split, Slovakia's 600,000-strong Hungarian minority began campaigning for self-rule, a potentially explosive demand in an area where Hungarian-Slovak coexistence is always uneasy.

"It is necessary to establish a sort of self-government and a special province with special rights and self-administration," said an open letter in a Hungarian-language newspaper signed by 100 mayors of towns and villages in southern Slovakia.

"Slovakia is in a vicious circle," said Frantisek Sebej, head of the M.E.S.A. Consulting Agency. "The more it is perceived as unstable, the less foreign investment it gets. That, in turn, slows economic transformation which we need to create jobs. Unemployment

fuels discontent, and so on..." Slovak unemployment is 15 per cent, more than three times that of the Czech Republic, at less than four per cent one of the lowest in the world.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) forecasts Slovak unemployment will rise to 18 per cent by 1995, compared with eight per cent for the Czech Republic.

The OECD recording a five per cent drop in Slovak gross domestic product in 1993, compared with zero growth in the Czech Republic. The organisation forecast Czech GDP to grow by two per cent in 1994 and five per cent in 1995. Slovak GDP in 1994 is forecast at zero, rising to two per cent in 1995.

Slovaks point out that their country had an unfavourable starting position when Czechoslovakia broke apart.

The smaller and less advanced partner in the federation, it began life as an independent country with an economy dependent on outdated heavy engineering and arms factories whose traditional Warsaw Pact markets had disappeared.

Once cut off from Prague, Slovakia had to build its own government infrastructure from scratch, from a diplomatic service to government public relations offices.

They appear to have failed spectacularly to persuade foreign investors of the advantages of investing in Slovakia.

These are largely the same as in the Czech Republic: A low-cost, skilled labour force, weak trade unions and proximity to markets.

Before Czechoslovakia ceased to exist after 74 years as a relatively successful state, optimists hoped that "velvet divorce" would be followed by an unusually close relationship between the former partners.

That idea collapsed along with a monetary union that fell apart after four short weeks. But a year ago not even the pessimists predicted that the gulf between the two new republics would grow so big so quickly.

Bosnia's year of disintegration

By Helen Despici-Popovic
Agence France Presse

SARAJEVO — Hopes that Bosnia-Herzegovina could be saved as a multi-ethnic nation collapsed this year when international negotiators, confronted with the results of 20 months of ethnic warfare, gave in to demands the republic be divided into Serb, Muslim and Croat mini-states.

Peace initiatives and cease-fires came and went, and with talks stalled at the end of a year marked by the breakdown of the Croat-Muslim alliance against the Serbs and the appearance of divisions among each of the warring communities, the international community was showing increasing signs of wishing to wash its hands of the problem.

The latest plan to date, provisionally accepted in late July by the Bosnian government, provided for the division of Bosnia into three mini-states, with the Muslims — and a 30 per cent population of non-Muslims — locked into a central strip running north to south loosely linked to pockets in the east and northwest.

The plan broke down over the Serb refusal to concede a further 3 to 4 per cent more territory demanded by the Bosnian government. Subsequently the Serbs demanded the division of Sarajevo into "twin cities."

Hopes of a settlement were raised during talks in Athens in May with the acceptance of the Vance-Owen plan — named after United Nations and European Community mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen — by all three sides. Owen was moved to declare a "bright new day in the Balkans."

Two weeks later the plan was wrecked when Bosnia's Serbs voted overwhelmingly in a referendum not to give up the territory they were required to concede under the plan. Mr. Vance resigned, giving way to Norwegian diplomat Thorvald Stoltenberg.

One effect of the plan had been the defection of Bosnia's Croats from the government alliance as they fought with Muslims to secure more territory prior to the division of the republic envisaged by the plan.

Over the summer the well-organised Bosnian army strung together a series of military victories against Croat forces, and some Muslim leaders began to demand the creation of a formal Islamic state, causing concern both to secular Muslims and to Serbs and Croats loyal to the government.

In October a demand for autonomy by the maverick leader of the Bihać pocket of northwestern Bosnia, Fikret Abdic, led to the spectacle of Muslim fighting Muslim in a civil war within the war.

Serb leader Radovan Karadzic faced disavowal of his own in September as troops in the Banja Luka stronghold mutinied in protest against the privileges of their chiefs, while the Croatian authorities in Zagreb sent a senior officer, General Ante Rosko, to impose order on the Croat defence forces, one of whose leaders, Ivica Raia, had proposed to join in the Serb bombardment of Sarajevo.

The Bosnian government cracked down on local warlords in their own territory, but Serb and Croat forces escaped increasingly from the control

of their patrons in Belgrade and Zagreb.

As Weimar-style inflation, fueled by international sanctions, brought the Serbian economy to a standstill, President Slobodan Milosevic sought vainly to force his Bosnian proxies to an agreement in Geneva.

Campaigning in legislative elections scheduled in Serbia on Dec. 19, Mr. Milosevic found himself outflanked for the nationalist vote by the quasi fascist Vojislav Seselj and the paramilitary leader Zeljko Raznjatovic known as Arkan.

In Croatia, the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) proved unable to prevent continuing low-level clashes between Croatian forces and separatist Serbs, and had not yet begun to permit Croats to return to their abandoned homes in Serb-controlled areas as required under the January 1992 Vance plan.

The UNPROFOR chief in Bosnia General Philippe Morillon became briefly popular in Bosnia when his personal intervention brought relief to the eastern enclave of Srebrenica.

But U.N. and relief personnel were hamstrung by a mandate which required them to keep Bosnians fed without keeping them from being killed.

LETTERS

Light for life

To the Editor:

Electricity is important and very useful in our life. In the past people used oil lamps, but in these days we use electricity for all kinds of things that make our life easier and more pleasant. We cannot live without electricity anymore as our lives are completely dependent on it.

Eyad Amin,
8th grade,
Jubeha School,
Amman.

Events warrant coordination

(Continued from page 1)

all the demands for coordination and cooperation have boiled down to opening banks, but the only thing that is the only thing that Jordan and Israel would agree on. "We do not want to crowd all strategic issues between us and Palestinians into the eye of the needle — banking. It is not fair," Anani said.

He said the rush over the initial of the Jordanian-Israeli bank agreement "gave the impression that Jordan was only interested in the economic issue."

But while Jordan was protecting its interests by stressing the need to coordinate with Palestinians, the Jordanians were not aware of the Palestinian sensitivity over getting something tangible that would indicate that the PLO-Israel agreement would culminate in a Palestinian state.

"The Palestinians, however, had something tangible in the economic agreement (with Jordan) that as shelled because you want to see a symbol of sovereignty, a central monetary authority," Anani said.

"Jordan was asked to wait for Palestinians to arrive at an agreement with Israel over something the possibility of which happening is very low," Dr. Anani added, saying whether this was a "trade-off that Jordan should accept."

He said that Jordan should not be seen to involve itself, however indirectly, in the issue of sovereignty and identity when it is not a problem with the Jordanians but an "Israeli-American problem."

"To pass the buck to Jordan was very clever Israeli game and I am sorry that some Palestinians fell for it," Dr. Anani said in reference to reports by some Israeli officials that Israel's rejection of giving

Palestinians a semblance of authority over bridges and border points was because "Jordan rejects it."

"The issue of borders is only a political issue that Israel has expanded to encompass all issues including tariffs, customs, control, travellers, security, etc.," Dr. Anani said, asking "where does one draw the line between the sovereignty that Palestinians want and the Israel which wants to alienate any issue of sovereignty."

"The borders now encompass issues that cut across Jordanian interests including the one of trade between the two banks," Dr. Anani said adding that if the "Jordanians are to pay tariffs on their goods then Jordan would impose tariffs on goods coming in from the West Bank and whole thing would stop being considered internal trade as it is now."

He said that when Jordan asks for coordination on an issue like this one, it is trying to achieve "symmetry in movement between the two banks similar to the one that exists for Palestinians travelling between the occupied territories and Israel."

"We want to move away from that asymmetry which makes it cheaper and easier to cross into Israel than to come to Jordan because it now works to the advantage of Israel — there is a built-in bias," he said, adding that Israel is working to "perpetuate the status quo economically."

To conclude, Dr. Anani said that to Jordan it is clear "that this mess necessitates settling down and talking (between PLO and Jordan)." But in response to a question on what Jordan intends to do if the coordination talks fail, he dismissed the possibility saying that Jordan "is not negotiating with an enemy but an ally."

Jordan, Egypt to revitalise panel

(Continued from page 1)

need for closer Arab coordination in the peace process. Mr. Hassan also underlined the importance of economic cooperation as complementary political cooperation in what appeared to be a reference to the joint committee, whose mandate includes setting up joint ventures and discussing trade and other related issues.

Mr. Hassan described his talks as successful and that the political aspect of his discussions covered the "past, present and future of the peace process."

Egypt has been trying to narrow the differences between Israel and the PLO in their negotiations to implement Palestinian autonomy as envisaged in the Sept. 13 self-declared accord. Cairo has been pressing the negotiations.

Mr. Hassan denied reports at Egypt was pressuring the PLO to accept Israeli proposals and said that Cairo was only willing to help the Palestinians whenever needed and to do so by the Palestinians.

He said he was willing to sit Israel to break the deadlock in the Israeli-PLO negotiations, but added that what is more important than mediation was "the honest implementation of the (autonomy) accord according to its text which talks about withdrawal and talks about establishing a national Palestinian

authority and other terms."

Mr. Hassan supported the PLO's stand that a document that was discussed during the Cairo talks with the Israelis did not represent an agreement but a set of Israeli proposals which were to be discussed by the leaderships of both sides.

"There were more than one document and more than one paper," Mr. Hassan said. "These were supposed to be presented to both leaderships and they had to give their views and decided to approve, reject or amend."

He said there was "room for flexibility and common ground," but said no definite date could be given for a resumption of the troubled negotiations.

"I expect an improvement, but we are still facing problems (necessitating) a delay of a short time," he said.

Mr. Hassan described as very important a Jan. 16 summit in Geneva between U.S. President Bill Clinton and Syrian leader Hafez al-Assad and said it could lead "to an improvement in the Syrian-Israeli track" of peace talks.

In the meantime, he said, "Israeli intransigence should not prevent Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese delegations to sit down to emphasise the importance of continuing the peace negotiations towards securing Arab interests."

Israel, PLO spar

(Continued from page 1)

as been said must be rejected," he told journalists. "Police Minister Moshe Shahal said, 'There are some steps in the right direction on the part of the PLO but its proposals are insufficient.'"

In Cairo, Dr. Shaath said his resignation could ask Egypt to "arbitrate" on the dispute. Egyptian Foreign Minister Imad Moustafa said the PLO is saying that there was "more than one document" drawn up by Israel and the PLO last week in Cairo.

Dr. Shaath offered to resume the negotiations "on the basis of the discussions" last Wednesday in the Egyptian capital, in a fax overnight to Mr. Peres, his ministry said.

Prime Minister Rabin and Dr. Peres met to discuss Dr. Shaath's offer but there was no word on when the negotiations would resume.

Dr. Shaath accused Israel of "blackmail" and said the PLO would not accept ultimatums. He said Israel was trying to pressure the Palestinians by accusing the PLO of hacking down on a deal. But the organisation was still ready to return to the negotiating table in Taba on Tuesday, he said.

"If it's necessary, we are ready to ask Egypt to arbitrate on this question so that we can identify the party which is failing to implement the declaration of principles" signed in Washington on Sept. 13, he said.

"There was no accord in Cairo," he insisted, challenging Israel to show any Palesti-

nian signature on its document. "There were ideas on which we agreed. But it was only ideas and they have to be negotiated."

In Oslo, an Israeli foreign ministry official and a PLO representative, both in Oslo to receive a Norwegian honour, on Monday expressed hope that the negotiations would overcome the stalemate.

"I was in touch with occupied Jerusalem... and there are very intense contacts going on between the PLO and Israel and the involvement of other governments," Uri Savir, a director general with Israel's foreign ministry, told a news conference.

"As far as we are concerned we remain committed. We have no doubt the same is true for the Palestinians and we will find the way and means to renew the negotiations," he added.

Mr. Savir and PLO officials Ahmad Qouria were on Monday awarded the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for their efforts to help sign the deal on self-rule.

"According to the declaration of principles we still have time because the last day of the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho is April 13," Mr. Qouria said.

"I still believe, I'm optimistic, that we will reach agreement soon and that the implementation will be in time."

Mr. Savir and Mr. Qouria have held informal talks while in Oslo, but both declined to comment on their content.

Where do human rights and economic development meet?

By Waleed Sadi

THE CONTROVERSIAL link between economic, social and cultural rights as given expression in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the civil and political rights as portrayed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) continues in spite of the attempt to resolve the issue during the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights last June. The developing countries pushed then for the submission that there can be no political democracy without first securing a minimum economic base. The western countries and western-oriented nations took up the opposite position by maintaining that there can be no economic development in the poor countries of the world without attaining a minimum level of democratic rule. The classic example offered by the former school of thought was that no nation can begin to guarantee fair trials without adequate resources. And what applies to the judicial branch of government, the supporters of this perspective contended, applies equally to other areas, including schools, hospitals and basic services which cut deep into basic human rights. The latter school of thought rebutted this assertion by pointing out that no state can be excused for practising torture, for example, simply because it is under-developed economically.

The issue was temporarily resolved at the Vienna meeting in favour of a middle course that upholds the organic link

between the two principal spheres of human rights nevertheless calling for the respect of basic human rights. As a matter of fact, both sides yielded somewhat to the logic of the other because both camps had legitimate explanations to back their seemingly contradictory points of view.

In retrospect, there is now greater awareness and appreciation of the proposition that some basic human rights indeed require economic development, such as education and medical service, while others do not, such as torture and ill treatment of prisoners or detainees. Accordingly, some basic human

Human Rights File

rights can indeed be respected and observed prior to achieving a certain minimum degree of economic development. In recognition of this submission, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 was split on purpose into two separate categories of human rights on the assumption that civil and political rights are by and large attainable without a parallel and simultaneous economic development whereas economic, social and cultural rights indeed call for monetary investment before they can be honoured and implemented.

The concern over the traditional conflicting submissions on the interrelation between the two sets of human rights does

not in fact lie in their substance and worthiness. What is really troubling about them is the observation that they are often invoked by many developing countries to justify lack of pluralistic democracy within them. As the human rights record of the majority of these nations is so dismal, it ends up weakening their otherwise strong arguments in favour of linking one major group of human rights with the other. Had the totalitarian or dictatorship governments been genuinely concerned about establishing a reasonable and fair connection between the two basic categories of human rights, they would have worked harder to improve their human rights situation. By exploiting their economic backwardness as an excuse for the perpetuation of their gross violation of human rights, the otherwise legitimate connection between economic and political rights becomes a suspect instead of receiving the respect and appreciation that it rightfully deserves.

Meanwhile, the debate goes on between the haves and have nots on how to reconcile lack of economic development with non-implementation of human rights as reflected in the international norms and treaties. This confrontation is not likely to end till the poor nations of the world end up becoming more developed economically, something that may still take generations, and in the process lose whatever pretext they still claim to justify their systematic and gross violations of human rights.

By Andrew Pollack

Japan pushes anti-cancer project

CHIBA, Japan — Ten months after the United States virtually abandoned a potentially powerful but extremely expensive approach to fighting cancer, Japan is completing a huge construction project here to put the technique to use.

The procedure, known as heavy-ion treatment, involves bombarding cancer cells with ions of carbon, neon and other elements whose electrons have been stripped off, leaving only the positively charged nuclei.

Evidence suggests that such heavy ions can kill certain cancer cells more effectively than the X-rays or cobalt gamma rays now commonly used in radiation therapy. Compared with X-rays or gamma rays, heavy ions concentrate more destructive energy directly on a tumor.

For about two decades, researchers have been experimenting with heavy-ion treatment, using accelerators built primarily for high-energy physics. The project under way in this Tokyo suburb, the Heavy-Ion Medical Accelerator in Chiba, or HIMAC, is the first large accelerator in the world dedicated solely to cancer treatment.

The accelerator, which will begin treating patients in March, cost about \$300 million to build. It will require another \$50 million a year to treat about 1,000 patients a year. The device occupies a space the size of two football fields and at its peak uses 25 megawatts of electric power, the capacity needed to supply 8,000 homes.

All this gargantuan equipment, power and expenditure will be harnessed to deliver beams lasting no more than one minute to a patient's

therapy will require about 15 to 18 treatments.

The usual forms of radiation treatment, X-rays and gamma rays, lose their energy gradually as they pass through the body, damaging not only the tumor but also the nearby healthy tissue. Heavy ions, by contrast, lose almost all their energy at once, so the destructive force can be concentrated on the tumor, killing cancer cells more effectively and reducing harmful side effects.

As a result, heavy ions are particularly useful for treating tumors in areas that can be severely damaged by radiation, such as the eye and spinal cord. Dr. Hiroshi Tsunemitsu, director of charged-particle therapy research at the National Institute of Radiological Sciences, which runs HIMAC, said it would be used for salivary gland and prostate cancers, which have proven resistant to X-ray treatment. He also plans to use the accelerator to treat lung cancer detected at any early stage.

The start-up of Japan's accelerator follows the shutdown of the one accelerator that had been used for heavy-ion treatment in the United States. The accelerator at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory in Berkeley, California, was closed in February after having treated about 400 patients since the 1970s.

For some kinds of cancer, heavy ions killed cancer cells in more than 60 per cent of the patients, a rate as much as twice as high as would be expected from X-ray treatment, said Dr. Joseph R. Castro, director of the heavy-ion trials at Lawrence Berkeley. However, he said, the data are not fully convincing because the

number of patients was very small and there were no randomized trials to compare heavy-ion therapy with other methods.

"From the Berkeley experience, all we can say is that we think it's promising," said Dr. Castro, who is professor and vice chairman of radiation oncology at the University of California's San Francisco

Medical Centre.

Caffeine and miscarriages

A new study suggests that pregnant women who consume the amount of caffeine in one and a half to three cups of coffee a day may nearly double their risk of miscarriage. The New York Times reported.

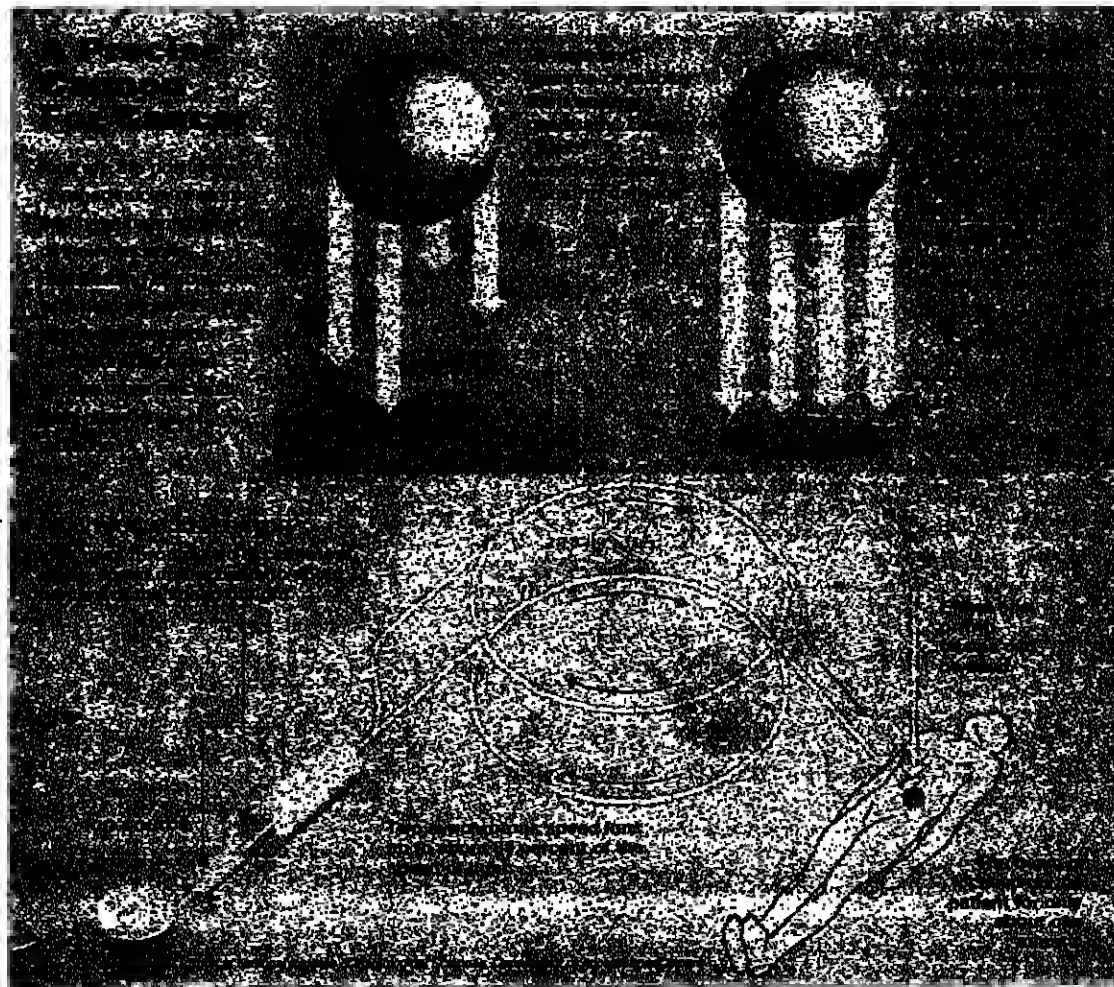
The researchers also linked high caffeine consumption —

the equivalent of more than three cups of coffee a day — in the month before pregnancy with a similar risk of miscarriage, said Dr. Claire Infante-Rivard of McGill University in Montreal, the primary author of the report. It was published in The Journal of the American Medical Association.

The study also found that

drinking the amount of caffeine in more than three times the risk of miscarriage, Dr. Infante-Rivard said.

The researchers said the study supported the longstanding recommendation by the Food and Drug Administration, based largely on animal studies, that pregnant women curtail their caffeine consumption. Previous studies have reached different conclusions about the possible dangers of caffeine for pregnant women — New York Times.



Newspaper reveals talents of Chinese bodyguards

BEIJING (AFP) — Abstaining from sex for 100 days, letting cars run over your head and handling state-of-the-art firearms — its all part of the job for China's elite bodyguards charged with protecting visiting dignitaries.

Offering a rare insight into the work of the 200-member force, the Beijing Youth News in its weekend edition detailed their intensive training routine and the frustrations of dealing with foreign VIPs.

Recruited from the ranks of China's armed police force or

directly from police academics, the chosen few are put through a rigorous training programme that includes an intensive course in the martial art of Qi Gong.

Following the 100-day course — during which no sexual contact is allowed — the trainees are capable of performing such feats as drilling through housebricks with their fingers, pushing needles through wine glasses and letting cars drive over their heads, the newspaper said.

So taken with their skills was

one Romanian military attaché posted in Beijing that he reportedly invited three of their number to Bucharest to demonstrate their techniques to Romanian bodyguards.

Confident in their abilities, the bodyguards guarantee 100 per cent security for a visiting foreign head of state. "If necessary, I would sacrifice my life to save the person I was guarding," one told the newspaper.

While fewer than 10 per cent of the bodyguards are women, they appear to have made favourable impressions on their foreign charges.

Empress Michiko of Japan, accompanying her husband Emperor Akihito on a state visit in October 1992, was so impressed by the diligence of the female bodyguard assigned to her — she insisted on

accompanying the empress to the bathroom — that she extended a personal invitation for her to visit Japan.

The newspaper also highlighted an incident during then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's visit in 1984.

Following talks with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, Mrs. Thatcher was walking down the steps of the Great Hall of the People when she stumbled and was saved from a nasty fall by her Chinese bodyguard Deng Xiangquan — while Mrs. Thatcher's own minders looked on.

Diligence and agility are not their only attributes. Bian Mei, the bodyguard assigned to Raisa Gorbachev during her husband's landmark 1989 visit, was also a finalist in the Miss

Beijing beauty pageant.

Their male counterparts, on the other hand, can come across as somewhat over-zealous.

During a walkabout by Jimmy Carter in Shanghai, a local resident who stepped forward to shake the former U.S. president's hand was knocked and pinned to the ground by several bodyguards as he reached into his pocket for a letter welcoming Mr. Carter to his city.

During a similar walkabout in the same city in November, a bodyguard assigned to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl demonstrated his martial arts skills by deftly chopping off a bouquet of roses thrown by an admirer in the crowd.

According to the newspaper, visiting American dignitaries have proved the most trouble-

some as they make no pretence at hiding their lack of confidence in the Chinese security.

Then-President Ronald Reagan offended his hosts by bringing a large personal security force for his visit in 1984.

During a visit by former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, American and Chinese security men almost came to blows when one of Mr. Baker's bodyguards insisted on searching the kitchen in the Diaoyutai State guesthouse.

Yet despite the tensions, the Chinese protectors display a wry sense of humour.

Asked by the newspaper if he was still up to the task, one overweight bodyguard of 20 years experience said his weight problem was "not serious. If I'm this size a bullet can't pass through me and hit the official."

Cressaty head of public affairs for Middle East Coca Cola

Rafik J. Cressaty has been named external affairs manager for the Middle East Division of the Coca-Cola Company, according to an announcement by Sandy Allan, division president.

"This is a time of tremendous opportunity for the Coca-Cola Company in the Middle East. Egyptian-born Mr. Cressaty brings unique skills and knowledge to this task and his contribution will be central to our strategies throughout the region."

In addition to his previous jobs in Egypt as bottler operations manager and manager of the region that included Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and Sudan, Mr. Cressaty has also worked for the Coca-Cola Company in Morocco, Greece and the company's headquarters in Atlanta.

Mr. Cressaty will be based in Windsor, U.K., which is headquarters for Coca-Cola Middle East operations in 18



countries.

"Growth in the Middle East is one of the Coca-Cola Company's primary objectives, and in the coming months I shall be working closely with managers throughout the region to help achieve their objectives," Mr. Cressaty said.

Mr. Cressaty has a mechanical engineering degree from Pratt Institute in New York City and is fluent in English, French and Arabic.

1994

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CF

Malaysia launches full-fledged Islamic financial system

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia Monday became the first country to have a fully fledged Islamic financial system with the launch of an interbank money-market that operates on an Islamic-sanctioned profit-sharing concept.

Nor Mohammad Yakop, adviser to the central bank, Bank Negara, said predominantly Muslim Malaysia was also the only country to have a Muslim financial system that ran parallel to the conventional banking system practised by the West.

Many bankers, however, see the Muslim system as a sham to hide interest payments or "riba" which are forbidden under Islamic law.

Mr. Nor said the launch capped a year of planning by the central bank to work out the financial instruments.

"The Islamic interbank money market operates on the basis of Al Mudharabah or profit-sharing, which simply means that the provider of funds will earn a profit from his investments instead of being paid interest," he said.

Bankers also began Monday to trade in short-term bankers' acceptance on a profit-sharing basis.

The profit earned from the money lent would be shared between the provider and borrower on a ratio that could

range from 70:30, 80:20 or 90:10 depending on the loan period, he said.

"The profit-sharing ratios will be liberalised by the central bank in due course when everybody is comfortable with the new system to allow the ratios to be negotiated between the investing and receiving institutions," he said.

The other countries which have an Islamic banking system are Pakistan, Iran and Sudan, but they do not have the conventional banking system and an Islamic interbank money market facility.

Indonesia, which has an Islamic banking system running alongside the conventional banking practices, also does not have an interbank money market facility, Mr. Nor said.

Bankers say the Malaysian development is a significant move that should be emulated by other Muslim countries to stem the large outflow of funds from Islamic countries to non-Islamic banks in the West.

"It is an irony that some Islamic countries are borrowing substantially from non-Islamic institutions in the West, while other Islamic countries are depositing funds with them," said central bank governor Jaffer Hussien.

Islamic banking in Malaysia was pioneered by the country's sole Islamic bank, Bank Islam Malaysia BHD.

Asian stocks begin year with a bang

HONG KONG (R) — Asian markets started the year with a bang Monday.

They were led by Hong Kong's Hang Seng index which finished the day at a record high of 12,086.49, and by the two Philippine markets and Singapore which also ended at all-time highs.

The dollar ended the day lower against the mark in thin trading. It finished at 1.738/48 against the previous New York close of 1.737/77.

Against the yen it closed at 111.73/83 against the New York close of 111.80/85.

Stock markets were closed because of holidays in New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan and Thailand.

Brokers said buy orders from overseas institutions continued to pour into the Hong Kong market.

The blue-chip Hang Seng index climbed 198.10 points, or 1.67 per cent, to 12,086.49 points after the market staged a strong surge in afternoon trade. It ended just short of an all-time high reached earlier in the afternoon of 12,115.56.

"Psychologically people are not really prepared to sell. They are setting their sights on 14,000," said one broker.

The Manila composite index leapt 75.43 points to finish at 3,271.51, against the previous record of 3,196.08 points set on the last trading day in 1993. The Makati market made a

similar two per cent jump to end at 3,362.48 points.

"We saw profit-taking in second-line issues, especially towards closing, but what led the market to continue its ascent were the heavyweights like PLDT, PNB and Meralco," said Rolando Pineda, vice president at Tower Securities.

The bulls also started the new year with vigour in Singapore, chasing the 30-share Straits Times industrial index to a record closing high of 2,441.53.

The index was up 15.85 points from Friday's close. This compares with the previous closing high of 2,426.85 set last Wednesday.

"Retail demand is still very

strong," one broker said, adding investors are buying on expectations of more gains in the next few weeks.

Kuala Lumpur share prices stayed firm on the back of further institutional and speculative buying and the index closed up 13.53 points at 1,288.85, after earlier setting a high of 1,290.86.

Gold closed marginally higher in Hong Kong in quiet trading. It finished at \$390.80/391.30 an ounce, up slightly from New York's \$390.40/90 close on Friday.

Spot crude oil prices in Asia were little changed from London's levels on Friday with February Brent bid around \$13.20.

Belgrade tries to break the back of hyper-inflation

BELGRADE (AFP) — Yugoslavia will act this month to curb hyper-inflation wrecking its economy and will ask the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to help it consolidate a new dinar — worth one billion old ones.

Yugoslav Prime Minister Radoje Konjic submitted a monetary recovery programme to the IMF at the end of December and has asked the IMF to send experts to Yugoslavia "before Jan. 14" to assess the programme's viability, the newspaper Borba reported Sunday.

The report quoted Mr. Konjic as saying his government

would "stabilise" the dinar starting Jan. 17 taking as a basis the reserves of the Yugoslav central bank plus the deposits of Yugoslav commercial banks now frozen in foreign countries because of U.N. sanctions.

"We will ask the sanctions committee of the United Nations to release these assets which we need to support our national currency," Borba quoted Mr. Konjic as saying. He said his aim was to "move from inflationary financing to an economy built upon a strong currency."

Up to now the government has tried to cope with the crisis by printing more and bigger banknotes. At the end of December it put into circulation a 500 billion dinar note which a few hours later was trading for \$8.

A new dinar worth a billion old ones was to be introduced on Jan. 1. The old dinar went

into circulation only in October with six zeros less than its predecessor.

Inflation which exceeded 20,000 per cent in November, was estimated at nearly 200,000 per cent at the end of December.

Inflation has been running at 30 per cent a day with prices — some in the hills — changing every few hours.

The economy is in chaos and production has declined inexorably since U.N. sanctions were first imposed in 1991 to punish Serbia.

Industrial output fell by 21 per cent in 1992 in the slump Yugoslavia comprising Serbia and tiny Montenegro.

The overall decline was 30 per cent between October 1992 and October 1993 with an acceleration to nearly 34 per cent in the first ten months of last year, according to the weekly Ekonomika Politika.

Iraq has no intention to devalue dinar

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, striving to boost confidence in its sinking dinar, said Monday it had no intention of devaluing the currency.

"There is no intention at all to lower the value of the Iraqi currency," Baghdad newspapers said, quoting the governor of Iraq's central bank, Tareq Talib Al Tukmaji.

His statement came at a time when the dinar was plunging against the U.S. dollar. It stood at 41 per dollar on the black market. The dinar's official rate is 3.2.

There is much conjecture here about what the government, battling against soaring prices, will do with the huge amounts of money in circulation.

Some say it will seize bank accounts. Others say it will devalue the dinar or change the currency.

China's premier urges economic caution

BEIJING (R) — Chinese Premier Li Peng, warning rapid price rises could bring instability, urged caution on economic speed and inflation in interviews published Monday.

Despite his warnings, economists said, China's overheated economy would surge again with both high growth and high inflation in 1994.

Mr. Li, who helped order the 1989 army crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrations set off in part by runaway inflation, vowed vigilance against price rises and said the economy should grow at only nine per cent this year after two years of 13 per cent growth.

"The better our situation, the more cautious we should be in pushing forward the reform drive," he told the official China Daily.

He made clear the government was extremely concerned about inflation, which is raging at well over 20 per cent per year in major cities and is at its highest rate for nearly five years.

China's capital, Beijing, recently reimposed price controls on crucial goods like grain and edible oil after the price of rice zoomed by up to 30 per cent in a matter of weeks.

Government officials have vowed to bring the nationwide grain price back under control. "Too rapid strides in prices reform would cause instability, and the recent panic buying of grain in some areas is a lesson to all of us," Mr. Li said.

The premier told the official Xinhua News Agency the State Council (cabinet) has proposed a target for economic growth in 1994 of nine per cent.

The economy grew by 13 per cent last year and by 12.8 per

cent in 1992.

Mr. Li expatiated that two consecutive years of high growth had burdened some sectors of the economy and created bottlenecks.

"A relatively relaxed environment is necessary for sustained economic growth."

While Mr. Li said he was confident China would be able to press forward with reforms that will eventually free oil, electricity and rail freight prices, he promised the measures would not go faster than the country could endure.

"We can never afford to lower our guard on the issue of prices," Mr. Li said.

"With every major reform measure, we will take into account the endurance of the country, the enterprises and the people, and adhere to the principle of (going) step by step," Mr. Li said.

But economists said China was likely to have another boom year with all the attendant problems.

"It's only wishful thinking that the economy won't grow so fast," said one Hong Kong-based analyst.

Even the official China Daily last week said the economy usually grew at a rate four to five percentage points higher than the official plan.

Political analysts said Mr. Li and other leaders were beginning to position themselves as cautious voices in case the economy did have serious problems later in the year.

Acknowledging China's reforms had benefited some regions more than others, Mr. Li promised the growing wealth gap between the booming coastal area and other less developed regions would not split the country.

New managers of troubled Spanish bank appeal to depositors for calm

MADRID (R) — The new managers of troubled Spanish banking group Banesto resumed efforts to revive it Monday after issuing a message of confidence amid reports of large withdrawals by depositors last week.

"We have very clear ideas on what we have to do and we ask for calm among depositors and clients as Banesto has a brilliant future among Spain's leading banks," Acting Chairman Alfredo Saenz Abad told state television late Sunday.

Mr. Saenz, a deputy chairman of Banco Bilbao Vizcaya, is working on a rescue plan involving the injection of new capital and hopes to maintain Banesto as an independent entity.

According to El Pais newspaper, customers of Banesto, one of Spain's highest, oldest and most respected banks, withdrew about 121 billion pesetas (\$861 million) in three days after the Bank of Spain sacked its chairman, Mario Conde, and his board last week.

Central bank governor Luis Angel Rojo has estimated that Banesto (Banco Espanol de Credito S.A.), awash with bad

debits after an uncontrolled bid to capture loan business, needs funds of around 500 billion pesetas (\$3.5 billion) to rescue it.

But the amount of new capital may be much less since Banesto has substantial assets and some of the loans can be recovered.

Mr. Conde has so far remained silent but is reported to have appointed lawyers to review his legal options. With 3.87 per cent, he is still Banesto's second largest shareholder after U.S. investment bank J.P. Morgan's Corsair Fund with 8.17 per cent.

The central bank's move has prompted questions about the government's handling of the affair and speculation about Banesto's true situation.

It was no secret that Banesto was in difficulties, or that J.P. Morgan was concerned about a deterioration in its accounts, but the Bank of Spain's action came as a surprise.

The ruling Socialist Party has asked National Securities Market Commission (CNMV) President Luis Carlos Croissier to explain his decision to suspend Banesto shares last Tuesday.

He acted after the shares

had fallen by almost 10 per cent but the drop was not particularly big and the Socialists are concerned about possible insider trading.

For more than two years, the Bank of Spain had given Mr. Conde more time to meet limits on bank investment within its own group, pension fund commitments and loan loss provisions but the time eventually ran out.

The crisis was hastened by Morgan's decision to postpone the third stage of a \$1.2 billion equity increase by Banesto — a \$400 million debt issue.

Mr. Conde is seen by many commentators as the last in a line of swashbuckling financiers spawned by Spain's economic boom of the 1980s.

When he took over Banesto in 1987, the bank was already under-capitalised, with the burden of a 100 billion peseta (\$7.6 billion) at current rates lost from the collapse of Banca Garria y Noguea, a subsidiary.

Mr. Conde turned Banesto around by the end of 1989 and aimed to lift its market share through aggressive lending. But recession turned many loans sour.

U.S. officials predict job growth

WASHINGTON (R) — Senior U.S. economic officials predicted Monday that the economy would add another two million jobs in 1994 while interest rates stayed relatively low and growth remained solid.

Labour Secretary Robert Reich predicted the unemployment rate could fall to as low as 6.0 per cent, from 6.4 per cent currently and 7.1 per cent at the start of last year.

"On the basis of the early indications," unemployment should be down, I would say, probably in the range six to 6.4 per cent," he said on the ABC programme "Good Morning America."

Mr. Reich said the economy appeared to have generated two million jobs last year, though figures have not been tallied for December. He said an additional two million jobs were likely to be added in 1994.

Deputy Treasury Secretary Roger Altman said in a sepa-

rate interview that interest rates would stay "relatively subdued" in 1994 while the economy grew by about three per cent.

Mr. Altman, in an interview on the NBC programme "Today," noted that real, inflation-adjusted interest rates were at their lowest levels in 20 or 30 years "and that can't continue forever."

"But there's no basis, either in meaningfully higher inflation or in much greater credit demand, to expect that interest rates would rise in a sustained way this year," he said. "We expect that interest rates will stay in a relatively subdued fashion in 1994."

The Clinton administration expects real economic growth — after inflation — of about three per cent for the year, he added.

The predictions by Mr. Reich and Mr. Altman came after Alice Rivlin, president Clinton's deputy budget director, indicated 1994 would

probably be a banner year for the economy.

Meanwhile, a panel of economic forecasters have predicted that the U.S. economy was poised for its best year since the 1980s because of low inflation and a growing job market.

The six economists interviewed by the Time magazine for its annual forecast said, however, that potential problems loom for 1996.

"I describe my outlook as the best of all possible worlds," said Edward Yardeni, chief economist for the investment firm C.J. Lawrence.

Others said President Clinton's attempt to reduce the deficit and reform health care have made Americans optimistic after three years of economic problems.

The economists said those consumers who have steady jobs and money in the bank see themselves as survivors of the lean years and are ready to open their wallets and spend money.

THE BETTER HALF, By Harris



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

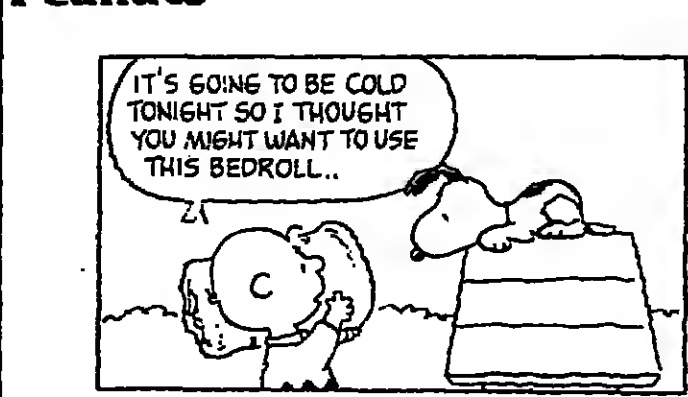


Print answer here: WITH A

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: FISHY OCTET FAIRLY RAGLAN Answer: How the electrician's helper treated his work — "LIGHTLY"

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY JANUARY 4, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Flighter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: The Libra Moon is squared four ways today through Venus, Mars, Sun and Mercury causing annoying delays in plans you are completing. Use any extra time you have to doublecheck related facts and figure.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Search for more progressive ideas this morning which can be put into operation quickly. Be firm this evening when higher-ups may be brusque because they are busy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make collections and pay obligations early in the morning. Be careful later you don't waste time with some new friend at the expense of a good partner and work that is practical.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Come to firm agreements with associates in the morning. Appraise anyone who opposes you, too. Take care you are not forceful where money is concerned later or you get in trouble.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Any task that awaits you can be done quickly and efficiently in the morning, then get out with close ties for a good time and come to a better understanding.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get to beauty or barber shop early in the morning and then set up appointments for social or recreational activities. Get task done in the afternoon but be precise and meticulous.

VIRGO: August 22 to September 22) Get fundamental affairs, home in order by luncheon.

Then the rest of the day and evening are fine for recreational activities, but don't be extravagant, as is sometimes your habit.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Try to get all business matters, shopping, etc., handled before lunch so that you can then devote your time and energies to home and family.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get monetary affairs handled properly in the morning. Heed suggestions of experts. Later, be sure you drive carefully and are gentle with associates and avoid trouble, accidents.

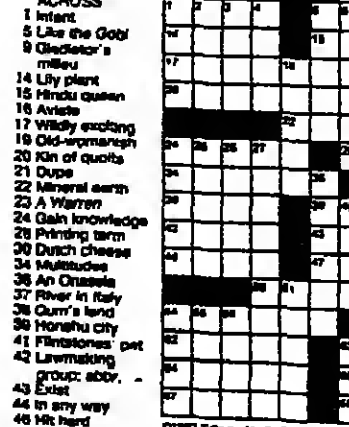
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A fine morning for investigating an really getting the facts. The be of assistance to close allies. Evening is best for planning future activities.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Follow advice of a truly good friend in the morning. Improve your position, as well as social contacts and handle all accumulated small task in the evening instead of feeling grumpy.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Every opportunity is yours this morning to handle civic affairs well and make the future brighter. Take care you do not quarrel with a pal in the evening.

THE Daily Crossword

by Rene M. Campbell



- ACROSS**
- 1 Infant
 - 5 Like the Gobi
 - 6 Goggles
 - 14 Lily plant
 - 15 Hindu goddess
 - 16 Aviator
 - 17 Wildly exclaiming
 - 18 Old-fashioned
 - 20 Km of quota
 - 21 Dope
 - 22 Mineral earth
 - 23 A Warren
 - 24 Gain knowledge
 - 25 Printing term
 - 26 Dutch cheese
 - 34 Mollusks
 - 36 An Orkney
 - 37 River in Italy
 - 38 Quin's land
 - 39 Honolulu city
 - 41 Flammable pet
 - 42 Levitating group; actor
 - 43 Artist
 - 44 In any way
 - 45 Hit hard
 - 47 Clipes
 - 48 Urge
 - 50 Last word
 - 52 "Norma"
 - 53 Becomes
 - 54 Conscious of
 - 57 around (British)
 - 62 Mountain ridge
 - 63 Sit up
 - 64 Plaster Edward
 - 65 Rim
 - 66 In of
 - 67 Map and job and
 - 68 Runhard
 - 69 Gen. Robert
- DOWN**
- 1 Rosewater
 - 2 El
 - 3 European capital
 - 4 Sefaradic
 - 5 Impetuously
 - 6 Doves
 - 7 Exavere
 - 8 "of star-crossed lovers"
 - 10 Org hand
 - 11 Writer Wiesel
 - 12 — contemder
 - 13 — clock
 - 18 Ma armadillo
 - 21 Courtyards
 - 22 Uncanny
 - 24 Those not of the clergy
 - 25 Rym of old time
 - 26 Circus VIP
 - 27 Reserved
 - 29 Ambition
 - 32 Baneroff and Jackson
 - 33 Anchovy
 - 35 Gradations
 - 40 Open port
 - 45 "Carmen" A.G.
 - 46 Carriage or cart
 - 51 Converter
 - 53 Infirmary
 - 54 Donaldson and Steele
 - 55 Old word
 - 56 Hawaiian bird
 - 57 Fair attraction
 - 58 Adjective suffix
 - 59 Sikons or Selenas
 - 60 Type of club
 - 61 Year
 - 63 Scarlet

- Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:**
- ACROSS: 1. BIRD, 5. Gobi, 6. Goggles, 14. Lily, 15. Hindu goddess, 16. Aviator, 17. Wildly exclaiming, 18. Old-fashioned, 20. Km of quota, 21. Dope, 22. Mineral earth, 23. A Warren, 24. Gain knowledge, 25. Printing term, 26. Dutch cheese, 34. Mollusks, 36. An Orkney, 37. River in Italy, 38. Quin's land, 39. Honolulu city, 41. Flammable pet, 42. Levitating group; actor, 43. Artist, 44. In any way, 45. Hit hard, 47. Clipes, 48. Urge, 50. Last word, 52. "Norma", 53. Becomes, 54. Conscious of, 57. around (British), 62. Mountain ridge, 63. Sit up, 64. Plaster Edward, 65. Rim, 66. In of, 67. Map and job and, 68. Runhard, 69. Gen. Robert.
- DOWN: 1. Rosewater, 2. El, 3. European capital, 4. Sefaradic, 5. Impetuously, 6. Doves, 7. Exavere, 8. "of star-crossed lovers", 10. Org hand, 11. Writer Wiesel, 12. — contemder, 13. — clock, 18. Ma armadillo, 21. Courtyards, 22. Uncanny, 24. Those not of the clergy, 25. Rym of old time, 26. Circus VIP, 27. Reserved, 29. Ambition, 32. Baneroff and Jackson, 33. Anchovy, 35. Gradations, 40. Open port, 45. "Carmen" A.G., 46. Carriage or cart, 51. Converter, 53. Infirmary, 54. Donaldson and Steele, 55. Old word, 56. Hawaiian bird, 57. Fair attraction, 58. Adjective suffix, 59. Sikons or Selenas, 60. Type of club, 61. Year, 63. Scarlet.

India, Oman tie up for oil refinery

NEW DELHI (R) — India's state-owned Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) and the Oman Oil Company (OOC) have agreed to establish a \$1.72 billion oil refinery in India, company officials have said.

They said that under an agreement signed in Bombay between the two companies the six-million-tonne capacity refinery will be set up in 1997 at Bina in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

The companies will each have a 26 per cent stake in the project with the 48 per cent of equity balance subscribed by the public.

The domestic Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency quoted a BPCL statement as saying the Indian government had approved the setting up of a joint venture company to execute the project.

The refinery would include single point mooring facilities and a crude oil terminal on the west coast as well as a cross-country crude pipeline.

Officials said the agreement followed a memorandum of understanding reached among the Indian and Omani governments and the two companies.

An agreement has also been reached for supply of crude oil between the two companies, the statement said, giving no details.

The Oman Oil Company, registered in Bermuda, has also signed a memorandum of understanding with India's state-owned Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. to set up another refinery in western India.

Inflation worry hangs over China

BEIJING (R) — The twin spectres of inflation and falling state industries still hang over China's booming economy, which has just racked up its second consecutive year of high growth.

China's economic boss, Vice Premier Zhu Rongji, has demanded the price of grain be brought under control so that an ambitious programme of market-oriented economic reforms can be carried out this year, official media has reported.

Last month the prices of grain and edible oil shot up by 30 per cent or more in some places in a matter of days, even though China has had a record harvest this year.

"The price of grain and (edible) oil are the foundation prices for the market," Mr. Zhu said.

"The current momentum of higher prices must be swiftly controlled and prices brought

back to a reasonable level in order to prevent a chain reaction."

Ye Zhen, spokesman for the State Statistical Bureau, told a news conference that China had to juggle the goals of fast and healthy economic development.

"1994 is the most crucial year for our country's reform, opening up (to the outside world) and economic construction," he said.

While gross domestic product (GDP), a measure of the size of the economy, grew by about 13 per cent in 1993 after 12.8 per cent growth in 1992, inflation lagged at twice the 1992 level, according to data released by Mr. Ye.

The cost of living price index jumped 14.5 per cent in 1993 after rising 6.4 per cent in 1992.

In the 35 major cities of China, inflation soared to 19.5 per cent last year against 10.9

per cent in 1992.

"The Chinese government has paid great attention to the price changes," Mr. Ye said.

He said he believed the economic growth rate could be brought down to a more sustainable 10 per cent next year.

But with China continuing to pump money into the economy, in part to keep failing state industries afloat, many economists worry that this year's growth and inflation levels will stay high.

More than 37 per cent of China's lumbering state industries, backbone of the old socialist economy, are still losing money, with the amount of their red ink 20 per cent higher at the end of November than it was a year earlier.

Many of the reforms planned for the near future will actually contribute to inflation and to the woes of state industry, economists believe.

Paris, Frankfurt stocks hit record closing highs

PARIS (AFP) — The Paris Bourse and the Frankfurt stock market set new records Monday in the year's first trading session, while the London market was closed for a bank holiday.

The Paris Bourse moved into record territory in a market encouraged by a trend to lower French interest rates — universally seen as needed to boost a lagging economy and counter high unemployment.

The CAC 40 index opened with a 0.23 per cent dip, but got onto an uptrend that took it over the 2,300-point mark for the first time ever in the early afternoon. The indicator then eased a bit to end at 2,290, up a hefty 56 points or 0.98 per cent on the day to a record closing high of 2,290 points.

That makes the indicator's

fifth record closing high since Dec. 23. It posted a strong 22 per cent gain in 1993.

The Bourse was boosted by a trend to lower French interest rates, as leading banks announced a 0.20 per cent cut in their prime rate in the afternoon to 7.95 per cent — the first time in two decades the strategic rate has been below eight per cent.

In view of the slack performance of European economies, most observers expect further rate cuts in the next few months — a development that would naturally encourage the stock markets.

German Bundesbank President Hans Tietmeyer expects lower German inflation this year, so that lower German interest rates would appear a reasonable likelihood.

Bourse stocks enjoying strong rises Monday included Metaleurop with 8.7 per cent, La Rochette seven, and BJS at 5.8 per cent. Accor was up 4.9 per cent, Eurodisney 4.5, and Eurotunnel 3.6 per cent.

The Frankfurt stock market also began the new trading year in style Monday, as the DAX spot trend index ended at an all-time closing high at 2,267.98 points, up 1.30 points or 0.05 per cent from the previous close.

The record came despite an early 30-point drop for the DAX in the morning. One dealer commented that "that gave investors the chance to buy stocks at slightly lower prices" than prevailed at the end of last week. "If the market had lost 50 points, I wouldn't have been at all surprised."

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
BANKING BANK CHARTERED AMMAN - JORDAN				
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CREDITED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 02/01/1994				
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING	PREV. CLOSING	OPENING	CLOSING
		PRICE	PRICE	PRICE
ABAN BANK	222,075	186,500	186,500	180,000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	70,882	4,200	5,300	5,260
CLUB OF JORDAN	199,132	41,500	41,750	41,580
CLUB OF JORDAN	2,201	2,210	4,250	4,250
WESTERN BANK INVESTMENT BANK	25,822	2,040	2,070	2,060
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	52,913	2,960	2,960	3,010
THE JORDANIAN BANK	5,929	5,600	5,620	5,670
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	2,150	2,140	2,150	2,170
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	42,120	1,550	1,570	1,640
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	10,965	4,550	4,580	4,640
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	3,979	4,000	4,000	2,970
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,122	1,120	1,120	1,120
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	2,154	4,550	4,770	4,800
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	622,740	1,820	1,850	1,880
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	527,789	2,420	2,420	2,420
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	13,250	3,790	2,650	2,650
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	5,704	3,540	3,540	3,570
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	42,819	2,300	2,320	2,310
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	7,715	1,320	1,310	1,310
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	12,569	6,650	6,750	6,780
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,584	1,580	1,580	1,580
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	15,155	2,220	2,220	2,200
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	10,778	0,740	0,740	0,740
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	9,025	3,800	4,020	4,050
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	2,092	1,640	1,610	1,600
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,922	1,720	1,720	1,720
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	101,475	3,000	3,000	3,000
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	16,729	10,000	10,000	10,000
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	15,190	7,620	7,650	7,650
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	16,729	10,000	10,000	10,000
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	44,303	8,270	8,280	8,280
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	305	3,050	3,050	3,050
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	285	2,850	2,850	2,850
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	4,390	2,770	2,770	2,770
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,915	1,910	1,910	1,910
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,998	0,360	0,360	0,360
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,141	1,140	1,140	1,140
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	43,834	2,450	2,450	2,450
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,141	1,140	1,140	1,140
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	4,194	1,560	1,570	1,540
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,653	0,220	0,220	0,220
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	10,130	6,420	6,420	6,420
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	2,106	3,220	3,230	3,230
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	20,453	7,150	7,200	7,250
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	25,810	4,470	4,470	4,470
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	3,318	1,300	1,310	1,320
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	3,940	0,360	0,360	0,360
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	1,460	2,480	2,480	2,480
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	27,650	3,350	3,360	3,360
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	7,138	1,380	1,380	1,380
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	2,625	2,900	2,900	2,900
JORDAN CREDIT BANK	169,978	5,490	5,470	5,390
TOTAL	2,719,428			

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Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 3/11/93	Singapore Close Date 3/11/94
Sterling Pound	1.4770	1.4813
Deutsche Mark	1.7382	1.7380
Swiss Franc	1.4880	1.4803
French Franc	5.9190	5.9030**
Japanese Yen	111.83	111.80
European Currency Unit	1.1130	1.1155**

* USD Per SFL

** European Opening in 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Date: 3/1/1994

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.13	3.28	3.38	3.75
Sterling Pound	5.18	5.31	5.25	5.12
Deutsche Mark	6.06	5.81	5.56	5.12
Swiss Franc	4.19	3.93	3.75	3.59
French Franc	6.37	6.18	5.81	5.45
Japanese Yen	2.25	2.00	1.81	1.65
European Currency Unit	6.49	6.17	5.93	5.43

Interest rates bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Precious Metals

Date: 3/1/1994

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	391.05	7.60	Silver	5.74	0.115

* 31 Karat

General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 3/1/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7040	0.7060
Sterling Pound	1.0403	1.0455
Deutsche Mark	0.4047	0.4067
Swiss Franc	0.4738	0.4762
French Franc	0.1190	0.1196
Japanese Yen*	0.0091	0.0092
Dutch Guilder	0.3617	0.3635
Swedish Krona	0.0411	0.0413
Italian Lira*	0.0411	0.0413
Belgian Franc	0.0411	0.0413

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Date: 3/1/1994

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8550	1.8780
Lebanese Lira*	0.040575	0.041625
Saudi Riyal	0.1850	0.1884
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2280	2.3240
Omani Riyal	0.19078	0.19203
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2080
Omani Riyal	1.7950	1.8200
UAE Dirham	0.19078	0.19203
Greek Drachma*	0.02765	0.02845
Cypriot Pound	1.3275	1.3785

* Per 100

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120 die in Siberia plane crash

MOSCOW (R) — All 120 people on board a Russian plane, including 16 foreigners, were killed Monday when it crashed in the icy wastes of Siberia and ploughed through farmhouses in Russia's worst aviation accident in nine years.

A spokeswoman for the State Committee for Emergencies said the captain of the Tupolev-154 craft had reported one of its engines catching fire minutes after taking off from the Siberian city of Irkutsk on a flight to Moscow.

As he turned back to the airport the other two jets failed. It was in the air for just 12 minutes.

"Then the plane disappeared from the screens of the radar control," she said. "Everyone died, they burnt to death."

"The bodies were scattered over a three kilometre radius. The area is cordoned off by police and troops of a military academy," she said. "They are looking for the corpses."

The spokeswoman said the plane had apparently exploded in mid-air. But Alexander Kamensky, head of the Irkutsk Civil Defence Service,

said this was not the case.

He told Reuters by telephone that the plane crashed landed in a snow-covered field near Mamony, a village of about 100 people deep in the Siberian wilderness.

He said it careened across the ice before hitting a farmhouse and bursting into flames. It then ploughed through high-tension electricity pylons and hit two more farmhouses before breaking up 300 metres short of the village.

"About 50 corpses are recognisable, 10 are badly burnt and the rest have been blown to bits," said Mr. Kamensky, who had just visited the site of Russia's worst crash in nearly a decade.

Eighty-two people were killed in an air crash near the industrial town of Ivanovo, near Moscow, in 1992.

In 1984, 150 were killed when a similar TU-154 hit a fuel tanker on the runway of the main airport of the Siberian city of Omsk and burst into flames.

The aircraft which crashed Monday was operated by Baikal Air, an offshoot of the giant state-owned Aeroflot airline.

It was not immediately clear why the plane's engines had failed.

There were no immediate reports of casualties on the ground in Monday's crash, 15 kilometres from Irkutsk, an industrial town situated on Lake Baikal, the world's largest freshwater lake and a famous tourist attraction.

But there was considerable destruction and the charred remains of many cattle were strewn about the wrecked farms alongside the remains of the aircraft.

Mr. Kamensky said he saw a woman weeping uncontrollably at a blazing farm. She said she had been working there for 38 years.

"She pleaded for help to save her cattle," he said.

Temperatures at the crash scene were minus 20 Celsius (minus four Fahrenheit).

Mr. Kamensky said among the 111 passengers was a tourist group of 14 people, including nine Germans, one Austrian, one Indian, two Chinese and one Japanese citizen. Another two Chinese citizens aboard the plane were travelling separately.

An official at the Air Traffic Control Centre in Moscow said the plane had its fuel tanks full for the five-hour flight.

"At the last moment the pilots realised that they would not make it to the airport and started to turn the crafts away from the city probably to try an emergency landing elsewhere," the official said.

The aircraft's flight would have taken it from Irkutsk across the tundra of Siberia and over the Ural Mountains, westwards into Moscow.

The TU-154, the workhorse of Russia's ageing civil aviation fleet, is built to take 124 to 164 passengers, according to aviation experts. But the load must be reduced when the aircraft is on a long non-stop flight with full fuel tanks.

Russian Civil Aviation, like other branches of Russian industry, must cope with dwindling supplies of spare parts, soaring costs and shortages of skilled workers.

Aircraft often run overloaded with passengers or cargo because of a shortage of aviation fuel that forces the cancellation of many flights.



Mexican army troops scramble from a helicopter as they pursue members of the Zapatista National Liberation Army near Rancho Nuevo (AFP photo)

Mexican army moves in after fight with peasant rebels claims 57 lives

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) — The Mexican army moved into this city in southern Mexico in force late Sunday in a bid to regain control following a day of bitter fighting at a nearby military base that raised the death toll in an armed peasant uprising to 57.

An estimated 200 Mexican soldiers patrolled the streets and warned residents to stay inside for safety.

The peasants, who call themselves the Zapatista National Liberation Army and say they are fighting for indigenous rights, took over what the government now says was six cities in the southern state of Chiapas in New Year's Day raids.

Previously, officials said only four cities were occupied, but the new figures came from the Interior Ministry in a statement issued late Sunday.

Gunfire and grenade explosions from skirmishes between the military and the peasants could be heard late into the night in the mountains surrounding this colonial city.

The Mexican army said 30 people, including six soldiers and 24 peasants, died in Sunday's battles at a military base near San Cristobal and at the city of Ocosingo 35 miles (56 kms) to the east.

It also said in a statement that it was expecting further attacks on the military base called Rancho Nuevo, which is 11 kilometres east of the San Cristobal, and gave the appearance of also expecting more trouble in the city itself.

The Interior Ministry statement said 27 people, including 24 police officers and three civilians, died Saturday when the rebels moved into the six cities, which included San Cristobal, Ocosingo, Altamirano, Las Margaritas, Chimal de Carmen and Abasco.

It also said the government had "made insistent exhortations for dialogue and a search for a peaceful end to the situation created by the armed group," but gave no indication that contact had been made with the rebels to arrange talks.

The Zapatistas said Saturday that they had declared war on

the Mexican government for crimes against the indigenous people and called for land reforms and a new government.

"The war we are declaring is a last, but not measure. The dictators have been applying a non-declared genocidal war against our people for many years," they said in a communiqué.

A rebel commander identifying himself as Commandante Marcos also told reporters that the uprising was tied to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the pact linking the U.S., Canada and Mexico in a free trade zone. It went into effect on New Year's Day.

"The North American Free Trade Agreement is the death certificate for the indigenous people of Mexico. We rose up in arms to respond to (President) Salinas' death sentence against our people," he said.

The Zapatistas pulled out of San Cristobal early Sunday, leaving behind slogans vowing to continue their "revolution," according to the military, they moved on to Rancho Nuevo and attacked the base.

Bosnians, Croats to meet; fighting eases

SARAJEVO (R) — Fighting eased in central Bosnia Monday and Croatia announced that peace talks with the Muslim-led Bosnian government would be held in Vienna this week.

Croatian Foreign Minister Ante Gitanic will meet Muslim Prime Minister Izetbegovic to discuss territorial disputes in the Bosnian conflict as well as humanitarian questions, Mr. Gitanic's spokeswoman, Vana Moric told Reuters Monday.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 1300 GMT Tuesday, Mr. Moric said. All three warring factions are to hold peace negotiations in Geneva in a fortnight's time.

Relations between the two sides deteriorated over the past few months after Muslim-led government forces launched an offensive against Bosnian Croats in the strategic Luvata Valley in central Bosnia.

At the weekend, the Bosnian government signalled further fighting, predicting a new push to capture the valley if the 65,000 Croats they have surrounded there did not leave.

The government wants the valley to secure its hold on central Bosnia and shelter hundreds of thousands of Muslim

refugees driven from their homes elsewhere by Serb and Croat forces.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and other senior Croatian officials last week hinted at possible military intervention to help their kin in the beleaguered republic.

Sources at the Geneva conference on former Yugoslavia said that European Union and United Nations mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg would also attend the Vienna meeting.

They said the talks would focus on how to secure access to the Adriatic Sea for a predominantly Muslim ramp Bosnian Republic as part of a peace deal.

In talks in Brussels last month, the three warring parties agreed to set up working groups on four key issues blocking an accord, including the question of access to the sea.

Tuesday's talks are also expected to cover a ceasefire agreement which was supposed to last throughout the Christmas season but which has been violated repeatedly by all sides.

The U.N. Protection Force in Sarajevo said Monday the fighting in central Bosnia was abating.

"We have the impression the last two days have been very quiet, except Sarajevo where there is still tension, and Mostar where it is not quiet," UNPROFOR's spokesman Major Imbeldi Van Biesebroeck said Monday.

Bosnian Radio said that central Bosnia was generally quiet Monday with sporadic small arms and artillery fire.

Croatian Radio said the Muslim forces were regrouping on all fronts in central Bosnia and south of Mostar and reported infantry attacks around Novi Travnik.

UNPROFOR reported Muslim-Croat fighting around Bosuwa which forced the Belgian-Dutch transport company based there to take to their bunkers at one point.

Mal. Biesebroeck said the situation remained unstable in Sarajevo with 80 per cent of the activity Sunday concentrated around front-line areas of Vogosca, Rajhava and Stup — suburbs to the north and west of the city.

But Sarajevo was quieter Monday after a weekend toll of at least six killed since New Year's Eve. UNPROFOR reported one person killed and seven wounded Sunday, with one killed on the Serb side.

Republicans demand independent Clinton probe

WASHINGTON (R) — Republican congressional leaders Sunday demanded an independent probe into President Bill Clinton's alleged affair with a White House intern.

Republicans took advantage of the quiet New Year's Day weekend to create a loud drumbeat of criticism, calling on Attorney General Janet Reno to appoint an independent counsel to look into Mr. Clinton's role as Arkansas governor in the Whitewater Development Corp.

But at the same time the Republicans opposed renewing a law that codifies the appointment of independent prosecutors.

"I think it's up to Janet Reno now to step back and appoint a counsel, and for the president's own good, get it behind us," Senate Minority leader Robert Dole of Kansas said on NBC's Meet The Press programme.

George Stephanopoulos, senior adviser to the president, replied flatly on ABC's This Week With David Brinkley programme: "There is no need at this time for an independent counsel." He said the matter was being investigated by the Justice Department.

And Mr. Stephanopoulos sarcastically hailed the "conversion" of Republicans who in the past have opposed the special prosecutor law.

But Gen. Dole said there was no need to renew the special prosecutor law, which provided an independent prosecutor be chosen by a three-judge panel instead of the attorney general. The law expired in 1992.

"She (Reno) doesn't need the special prosecutor law," said Gen. Dole, who voted against renewing it. "She has the authority now to appoint independent counsel."

Reynolds tries to save N. Ireland deal

DUBLIN (R) — Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds hinted in remarks published Monday at concessions towards Sinn Fein, whose leaders complain that the Anglo-Irish statement does not put pressure on the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland to accept an eventual unification of Ireland.

Mr. Reynolds said a Dec. 15 Anglo-Irish joint statement to end 25 years of conflict in Northern Ireland and committed both governments towards building a new Ireland and demilitarisation of the conflict in the British-ruled province.

"If the statement makes clear that both governments and both communities will become persuaders for a new agreement on the future of the whole island. The time has come to start the process of demilitarisation of the north-east conflict."

The term "persuaders" was seen as a concession towards Sinn Fein, whose leaders complain that the Anglo-Irish statement does not put pressure on the Protestant majority in Northern Ireland to accept an eventual unification of Ireland.

Sinn Fein has called for years for the "demilitarisation" of Northern Ireland, where 18,000 troops and 12,000 armed police are on alert against attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is fighting to end British rule.

Mr. Reynolds's statement contrasted sharply with the stance taken by British Prime

Minister John Major Sunday when he ruled out any alteration of negotiation of the text of their Downing Street Declaration on Northern Ireland.

Martin McGuinness, one of Sinn Fein's top officials, told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) radio the IRA wanted to know whether the statement represented a first step towards British withdrawal from Northern Ireland.

He said they wanted clarification about whether "this signalled the beginning of the process of bringing about an end to British rule in Ireland."

David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party, which wants the province to remain British, accused Mr. Reynolds of trying to appease the IRA.

India, Pakistan talks end in impasse

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Indian and Pakistan ended two days of talks on Kashmir Monday with positions still widely apart and without setting a date for future negotiations.

A joint statement issued after four sessions between Indian Foreign Secretary J.N. Dixit and his Pakistani counterpart Shaharyar Mohammad Khan said the talks addressed "all aspects" of the Kashmir problem.

The Himalayan territory has been divided into Indian and Pakistan-ruled parts.

"Both sides recognised that there are basic divergences," it said, adding that it was agreed that "sincere efforts would be made to resolve the problem."

The statement emphasised the need for continuing dialogue, but no date or venue was announced.

Mr. Dixit and Mr. Khan, at a joint press conference, said the talks which began Sunday had helped in reducing tension over a bloody Muslim separatist movement in Indian-held Kashmir.

Meanwhile, Muslim guerrillas abducted two Kashmiri academics from a university in Srinagar, triggering a major police hunt. The Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Monday.

Ahul Rashid and Sirajuddin (one name), professors at an agriculture university, were abducted at gunpoint late Sunday by a group of masked men armed with automatic weapons, the news agency said.

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Koreas prepare for U.S., Japan recognition

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea has appointed top officials, including the brother of President Kim Il-Sung, to prepare for a sudden rapprochement with Washington and Tokyo. South Korea's Yonhap News Agency said Monday.

The report came as South Korea's foreign minister said Seoul was also preparing for the change amid reports of a breakthrough in the international dispute over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programme.

Yonhap quoted an unnamed official here as saying that the

Communist Party in Pyongyang had named two special top-level teams to cope with "a sudden and rapid rapprochement" with Tokyo, Washington and South Korea.

The United States is still technically at war with North Korea.

It is divided from the South by the last standing frontier of the cold war — the heavily fortified 38th Parallel — and has since March raised fears it was planning to use nuclear arms to try a suicidal military takeover of the South.

There was no official or in-

dependent confirmation of the detailed Yonhap report, the first of its kind, which tended to confirm separate reports of a breakthrough in low-level talks between Washington and Pyongyang in New York.

The report named Kim Yong-Ju, the recently reinstated younger brother of Kim Il-Sung, 81, as being in charge of both teams.

The teams are "similar to the task forces that China formed to prepare with normalisation of diplomatic ties (in the 1970s)," the official told Yonhap.



Rainier and Niven may tie the knot

Prince Rainier of Monaco and Björk Niven, the Swedish-born widow of British actor David Niven, may marry, according to weakened British press reports. A spokeswoman for the Principality of Monaco, Isabelle Peters, told the Associated Press she was unable to confirm the report. Prince Rainier's wife the former American actress Grace Kelly died from injuries in a car crash in 1962. Mrs. Niven's actor husband died of a muscle-wasting disease in 1983. The London newspaper the Daily Mirror said that the 70-year-old prince and Mrs. Niven were reported to have discussed marriage while dining at a Manhattan restaurant on a visit to New York. "Reports in Italy and France say the couple will marry in Monte Carlo in the spring when Prince Rainier might finally step down in favour of his 135-year-old son, Albert," the paper said. The prince has ruled the tiny European principality of Monaco on the Mediterranean since 1949. The Daily Mirror

said there had been no confirmation or denial of the story from the prince's palace in Monaco. Another London tabloid, the Daily Express, which carried a similar report, quoted Prince Rainier's Paris-based lawyer Thierry Lacoste as saying: "I know him sufficiently well to say that there will be no marriage. The press have been linking him with Mrs. Niven for years now but it is all false." But the Daily Express quoted unnamed friends of the prince as noting it is Mr. Lacoste's job to shield him from publicity. The Daily Express gave the age of Mrs. Niven, a former model, as 72. It said that when Princess Grace and Niven were alive the foursome socialised together and went on foreign trips together. Prince Rainier was among mourners at Niven's funeral. The photograph shows Prince Rainier and Mrs. Niven during the funeral of the actor in Chateau d'Oex (AFP photo).

NATO struggles on East, Russia ahead of summit

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO, facing pleas for membership from Eastern Europe and opposition from Moscow to any expansion, is struggling just one week before an alliance summit to achieve a balance that will please all of its former enemies.

The question of whether and when to expand NATO membership is one of the most difficult the Western alliance has faced since it was founded almost 45 years ago.

NATO leaders, in their first summit in more than two years, are expected to endorse a plan for closer military links with all former Warsaw Pact states, including Russia, when they meet in Brussels next Monday and Tuesday.

But the U.S.-sponsored plan, known as "partnership for peace", has been criticised by some Eastern European states such as Poland and Hungary. They want membership and firm guarantees of their security that are not on offer.

At the same time, Moscow has vigorously opposed any expansion of NATO to the East on the grounds that it would isolate Russia and strengthen the hand of hardliners.

The success of extreme

nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy in last month's Russian elections has underscored for NATO how the new era of post-cold war cooperation could end if Russia, Europe's biggest military power, turned its back on reform.

As a result, alliance officials and diplomats say, there is no chance of offering Eastern European states membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in the near future.

"The key to European security is Russia and there is broad agreement that we simply cannot afford to alienate Moscow," said one diplomat, who asked not to be identified.

"If we took on Eastern European nations, we would simply risk pushing the Russians too far. Partnership for peace offers everyone a chance for cooperation and does not discriminate."

But the alliance also faces criticism that it is not doing enough to help countries such as Hungary and Poland which have pushed ahead with reforms and are nervous about growing instability, ethnic and nationalist tensions in Europe.

Eastern European states, as

well as some Western analysts and policymakers, have urged NATO to make a holder approach in rewarding those with a clear commitment to democratic values.

Russia, they say, has been given an effective veto over NATO expansion — something alliance officials deny — and Mr. Zhirinovskiy's election success simply made Eastern European states, especially the Baltic republics, even more worried.

As NATO makes final preparations for the summit, some of the key elements in this difficult balancing act have yet to be resolved, officials say.

NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner has pressed for a clear commitment from the summit that the alliance will now be open to new members, although without setting a time frame.

But some allies are reluctant to produce anything other than a vague statement that the alliance will not remain a closed shop forever. France and Britain are among the most cautious.

In addition, it is not yet clear how far "partnership for peace", which will involve bi-lateral deals on military coop-

eration and peacekeeping between NATO and former Warsaw Pact states, will be linked to expanded membership.

Although NATO has agreed that the scheme will not be an automatic qualification for joining, the United States has suggested to its allies there should be a link to encourage disgruntled Eastern European states.

"The Americans have suggested that there should be some kind of phrasing implying that it would be a necessary but not automatic step towards membership," said one NATO official.

But some other alliance members are unhappy with that linkage and think it would only confirm Russian fears that NATO is secretly preparing to take on a selected few as new members.

The U.S. administration has been trying to persuade Eastern Europe the go-slow approach is the best way ahead.

President Bill Clinton will give that message to the leaders of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia at a meeting in Prague after the NATO summit, before he travels on to Moscow.

Barbra Streisand plans tour

LOS ANGELES (R) — Barbra Streisand, who ended a 27-year break from public performances with two sold-out shows in Las Vegas over the weekend, said she plans to take her show on the road. The singer told Hollywood trade paper Daily Variety that she will tour a few cities and may tape a New York show for television. The paper, in its Monday edition, did not say when she would start touring. But she said her immediate plans were to develop two scripts. The Mirror Has Two Faces and The Mirror Has Two Faces, she will star in the former and direct both. Streisand performed New Year's Eve and Saturday night before about 30,000 people in total at the MGM Grand Hotel. Fans included President Bill Clinton's mother, Virginia Clinton Kelley, close friend Andy Agassi and a who's who of Hollywood. She told Daily Variety that she was frightened about appearing, but started to enjoy herself by the second night. The paper also confirmed that beleaguered singer Michael Jackson emerged from hiding to attend one of her shows apparently accompanied by former junk bond king Michael Milken and singer Paul Anka. Jackson visited Streisand backstage. Daily Variety added.

A rebel commander identifying himself as Commandante Marcos also told reporters that the uprising was tied to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the pact linking the U.S., Canada and Mexico in a free trade zone. It went into effect on New Year's Day.

"The North American Free Trade Agreement is the death certificate for the indigenous people of Mexico. We rose up in arms to respond to (President) Salinas' death sentence against our people," he said.

The Zapatistas pulled out of San Cristobal early Sunday, leaving behind slogans vowing to continue their "revolution," according to the military, they moved on to Rancho Nuevo and attacked the base.

Pilot aborts flight with ticketless man on board

DHAKA (R) — A Bangladeshi who tried to sneak a plane ride to Dubai without a ticket or passport delayed a flight from Dhaka for four hours, airline officials said Monday. They said Ujjal Kumar Roy, 24, slipped into the airport early Sunday by climbing a wall and made his way onto a DC-10 aircraft. A flight attendant spotted him minutes before the flight of the Bangladesh Airlines Biman was due to take off and told the pilot, who called police. Roy told police he fled his home in the western district of Jessore after a quarrel with his father and decided to go to Dubai for a job. "But I had only 150 taka (\$4) in my pocket. I managed to reach Dhaka by bus without a ticket and thought I would make it to Dubai the 'safe' way," he said.

"I was the first passenger on board and nobody watched or asked me anything while boarding," he told police. Biman officials said the pilot refused to take off without a thorough security check. Authorities had to shift passengers to another aircraft, which delayed them by four hours. Airline and airport authorities have started a joint investigation of the incident.

He said they wanted clarification about whether "this signalled the beginning of the process of bringing about an end to British rule in Ireland."

David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party, which wants the province to remain British, accused Mr. Reynolds of trying to appease the IRA.

Singer Tammy Wynette improving

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (R) — Country singer Tammy Wynette, who collapsed from an intestinal infection Tuesday, improved enough to be taken off a life-support system Sunday and said: "I just thank God that I'm alive." Her publicist, Evelyn Shriver, said Ms. Wynette, 50, who had been placed on a respirator last Wednesday, was "showing a big improvement and is much stronger."

"I don't remember a lot but I feel wonderful to be alive and want to thank everyone for their prayers," Ms. Wynette, whose hits include Stand By Your Man and D-I-V-O-R-C-E, said in a statement. Ms. Wynette was in serious condition at Baptist hospital and was in good spirits and smiling at visitors, Ms. Shriver said. She said Ms. Wynette may be moved out of intensive care into a private room in the next two days.

Ms. Wynette is being treated for an intestinal infection that resulted from a blocked bile duct. Ms. Shriver said the blockage occurred when scar tissue from a previous operation became infected. Ms. Wynette, who has been in ill health for years, underwent bile-duct surgery last year. Aileen Kacher, a hospital spokesman, said the hospital had been flooded with calls from well-wishers from around the world, including singing stars Elton John, Sting, Garth Brooks, Smokey Robinson and Reba McEntire.

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Nigerian leader has 10th child on New Year's Day

LAGOS (R) — The wife of Nigeria's 50-year-old military ruler General Sani Abacha gave birth to a baby boy on New Year's Day, state radio announced Sunday. It brings to 10 the number of Mr. Abacha's children by his wife, Maryam. The couple have been married for 28 years and already had six sons and three daughters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sampras in Qatar lambasts Becker

DOHA (AP) — Boris Becker is not here to defend his title because his wife is expecting a baby. But the \$525,000 Qatar Open which was to start Monday packs other big names irked by the German star's suggestions that some of them use drugs. World No. 1 Pete Sampras arrived Sunday and became the second tennis star to lash out at Becker from Doha. "It's not an accurate comment and I was very surprised to hear Boris say it," said Sampras. "As far as I know, nobody takes steroids or any sort of enhancer. I certainly do not." Sampras noted that the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP), the sport's world governing body, "has made it a point to reveal if anyone was caught" taking drugs. "What Boris said doesn't make any sense." German player Michael Stich, the world's No. 2, had already hit back at Becker when he arrived Thursday. "It was a stupid comment to make," said Stich. "I don't know why he comes out with such things or from where he gets his ideas." Becker had claimed last month that some players used drugs such as cocaine and marijuana which was making a mockery of the random drug tests carried out by the ATP. Sampras, the reigning Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion, plays his first round match here Tuesday when he takes on Morocco's Karim Alami, who had to qualify for the main draw. Stich takes on big serving Frenchman Stephane Simian while number three seed Stefan Edberg of Sweden will open the tournament against South Africa's Gary Muller. Also taking part in the tournament are Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic, the runner-up to Becker in the final here last year, and Frenchman Henri Leconte. Both men start their singles first round Tuesday.

Morcell named Athlete of the Year

PARIS (AFP) — Algerian middle distance runner Nouredine Morcelli is named Athlete of the Year by French sports daily L'Equipe in its Monday edition. Morcelli, who broke Steve Cram's world mile record in September after retaining his World Championship 1,500m crown in Stuttgart, topped the paper's poll ahead of Britain's world and Olympic 100m champion, Linford Christie. The Chicago Bulls third NBA crown earned retired basketball superstar Michael Jordan third place ahead of Tour De France champion Miguel Indurain. The highest-ranked woman was Hungarian swimmer Kristina Egerzegy in tenth place.

Auriol feels the heat in the desert

PARIS (AFP) — Hubert Auriol lost more than an hour to the other leaders of Paris-Dakar Rally when the engine of his Citroen burst into flames half-way through Sunday's special stage in the Western Sahara. Auriol was able to restart after getting the fire under control and repairing the fault but he eventually finished 1h 8min behind the German Erwin Weber, the winner of the 693km stage from Tan-Tan to Dakhla. Weber was followed home in the second stage of the rally by his Mitsubishi team-mate Kenjiro Shinokura. The Japanese driver shaved just over two minutes off Pierre Laritigue's overall lead, which is now down to 13min 25sec. Weber is third just over two minutes further back. Despite his lost time, Auriol is still in fifth place.

Tomba hints at retirement

ROME (R) — Italian Alpine skiing star Alberto Tomba has suggested that his glittering career is drawing towards a close. "This is not a long future for me in skiing. I don't imagine I'll still be on the World Cup circuit when I reach my 30s," Tomba, 27 two weeks ago, told the Gazzetta dello Sport in an interview. The flamboyant Italian, who next month bids to become the first athlete to win a total of four Alpine skiing Olympic golds, nurtures dreams of stardom in the movie world. "I'm beginning to think about my future beyond the world of sport. I've had offers from an agency in Hollywood," he said. Slalom specialist Tomba, three golds and a silver medal in the last two Olympics, said the courses at the games tend to be easier than those on the World Cup circuit.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& YANNAH HIRSHI
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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q1.—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A643 ♠A43 ♠Vold ♠AK1093
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1♠ 2♣ 2♠ 3♣
What do you bid now?
A.—You might perhaps try to find out exactly what North holds by starting with a cue-bid of four diamonds. However, we doubt whether you will be able to locate such a key card as the queen of clubs, which could be crucial to a slam. We would simply take our chances and bid six spades.

Q2.—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Q9764 ♠A92 ♠AJ ♠Q85
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1♠ 2♣ 1♠ 2♣
What do you bid now?
A.—Partner has shown a balanced minimum opening bid. With your balanced hand and 13 high-card points, there's no need to look further. Jump to three no trump.

Q3.—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠7 ♠AQ85 ♠K7652 ♠732
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1♠ 2♣
What action do you take?
A.—If you choose two no trump, when your source of tricks? If partner doesn't have a diamond fit, you're in trouble. The question is whether you should double for penalties or pass, and we lean to the former. If you play negative double, the problem is what to do after you pass and partner responds with a double.

Q4.—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AJ1065 ♠Q9 ♠Q105 ♠454

The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1♠ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♣ Pass 2♣ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—It's simply a question of whether you should rebid your spades or suggest a no-trump game. The modern theory of reverse bidding says that responder's primary duty is to support one of opener's suits if possible; if not, to rebid a five-card major. That would make two spades the clear choice.

Q5.—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K87 ♠83 ♠A9 ♠AQJ987
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1♠ Pass 1♠ Pass
2♠ Pass 2♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—So far you have done nothing more than tell partner you have a minimum opening bid with at least five clubs. However, your honors in partner's suits improve your holding, and you know you have an eight-card major-suit fit. Tell partner the good news by jumping to three spades.

Q6.—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠K476 ♠Q983 ♠AJ943 ♠5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1♠ Pass 1♠ Pass
1♠ Pass 1♠ Pass
What do you bid now?
A.—For the moment, you have no reason to assume that the hand belongs in no trump. Partner has not denied holding four spades and, if you have a 4-4 fit, the suit should prove a vastly superior contract. Bid one spade. That's forcing and partner's next bid will help you decide where you want to play.

Papin sent off but Milan stretch lead

ROME (R) — The first-half dismissal of French striker Jean-Pierre Papin failed to stop champions AC Milan defeating Reggiana 1-0 and increasing their lead in the Italian first division to two points. Marcel Desailly's 28th minute goal, his first since joining Milan from Olympic Marseille last November, proved sufficient for the champions to end Reggiana's unbeaten home record while Papin was sent off after appearing to elbow an opponent in the 37th minute. Milan lead the table with 25 points from 16 matches, two clear of Juventus and Sampdoria, who have both played a game more.

They travel to struggling Udinese next Thursday but are already assured of finishing the first half of the 34-match campaign on top of the table — as they have done in the previous two championship-winning seasons.

Newly-crowned European Footballer of the Year Roberto Baggio started 1994 impressively, leading Juventus to their first away win of the season with two goals in a 3-0 win at Udinese.

Sampdoria's Ruud Gullit claimed the first goal of the new year with a sixth minute header against Lazio but Giuseppe Signori equalised from the penalty spot in the 38th minute.

Parma dropped to fourth place in the table with a 1-1 draw at Piacenza while in 87th minute goal from Pierluigi Orlandini earned Atalanta a shock 2-1 win over Internazionale, joint fifth with Lazio at the start of the day, at the San Siro Stadium.

Although stuck in the lower reaches of the table, newly-promoted Reggiana started the day with an unbeaten home record to match that of the league leaders.

Milan's determination to put the record straight was evident as early as the seventh minute when a long-range drive from Alessandro Orlando hit the post.

The champions only had to wait until the 28th minute before taking the lead. Reggiana's defence failed to clear a corner from Roberto Donadoni and Frenchman Desailly seized on the loose ball to fire his side in front.

Reggiana's hopes of saving the match were boosted by the sending-off of Papin but the efficient Milan maintained their grip on the match by closing down the midfield and starving the Reggiana defenders of the ball.

Against Udinese, Baggio began World Cup year at his brilliant best.

In the 11th minute, it was his perfectly weighted pass which gave team mate Giancarlo Marocchi time and space to open the Juventus account, with a finely-angled shot.

Three minutes into the second half, goal-maker turned goal-scorer as Baggio's cheeky backheel from a cross by Angelo Di Livio found the net via a deflection.

The prolific playmaker took his total for the season to 11 in the 61st minute, slaloming through the Udinese defence and sliding the ball past goalkeeper graziano Battistini.

Gullit's goal for Sampdoria against Lazio means the Dutchman has now scored 10 goals in his first season with the Genoa club — one more than in his best season at Milan.

The early goal forced Lazio

onto the offensive as the Rome side struggled to maintain a run of form which has brought 15 points in the last 10 matches.

Croat Alen Boksic was a constant thorn in the side of the Sampdoria defence and in the 10th minute forced Italy international goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca into a spectacular diving save with a fierce snap-shot on the run.

The home team finally drew level when Roberto Di Matteo in the penalty area. Signori made no mistake with the penalty — his seventh goal of the season.

Gullit spurned a match-winning chance soon after the interval when Luca Marchegiani — Pagliuca's international deputy — smothered his goal-bound shot.

England midfielder Paul Gascoigne, struggling with a groin injury this week, was substituted in the 48th minute.

Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp appeared to have spared Inter's blushes against Atalanta when his 82nd penalty kick equalised a first-half effort from Oscar Magoni.

But with three minutes remaining, Pierluigi Orlandini struck a late winner for the visitors, who started the day third from the bottom.

Napoli, enjoying a good season with an inexperienced team, missed the chance to move level on points with sixth-placed Inter when they were held 1-1 at home by mid-table Foggia.

Dutch winger Bryan Roy put Foggia ahead in the 80th minute with his ninth — and simplest — goal of the season, applying a touch on the line to a goal-bound shot from Pierpaolo Bresciani.

Napoli grabbed a deserved equaliser in the 50th minute when Libero Giovanni bia lobbed home.

Meanwhile an angry outburst by controversial Internazionale goalkeeper Walter Zenga after a 2-1 home loss to Atalanta Sunday clearly illustrates the current sense of disappointment in the Inter camp.

Inter, tipped by many as championship contenders before the season, now find themselves in sixth place, five points behind leaders and city rivals AC Milan, who also have a game in hand.

Sunday's defeat at the half-way point in the season may not have eliminated Inter from the title contest but it represented an unexpected reverse against one of the relegation strugglers.

Zenga, in particular, appeared to react badly to the loss, waiting on the pitch for more than three minutes after the final whistle in order to exchange angry words with Atalanta coach Andrea Valdinoci.

The two men appeared to insult one another at the tunnel entrance leading to the dressing rooms, and might have come to blows were it not for the prompt intervention of Atalanta and Inter officials.

During the game, Zenga and Valdinoci appeared to exchange insults following the awarding of a penalty to Inter and the scoring of Atalanta's late 87th-minute winning goal from Orlandini.

Inter players accused Valdinoci of abusing Zenga and telling him: "(Arrigo) Sacchi is dead right not to pick you for the Italian team."

Australia, Austria reach semifinals
Electronic line system gets final warning at Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia (R) — Australian officials threatened to pull the plug on tennis's new computerised line-call experiment at the Hopman Cup Monday after the system malfunctioned because of magnesium in a player's racket.

The quarterfinal between Australia's Wally Masur and France's Cedric Pioline was disrupted on several occasions by rogue bleeps from the court-side machine, later blamed on Pioline's old-fashioned racket which contained magnesium.

Hopman Cup organisers had been assured no outside metal object could activate the system and tournament referee Peter Bellenger warned: "If there are any future problems, we would have to close it down."

The developers of the TEL (Tennis Electronic Lines) system insist Pioline's racket is so unusual there is no danger of future malfunctions.

But they have already suffered setbacks during tests at the U.S. and Australian Opens, blamed on players' shoes and extreme weather conditions respectively, and Hopman Cup director Paul McNamee hinted his patience was wearing thin.

"We believe this is an isolated incident but TEL must solve it. There is no way this can happen again without catastrophic consequences for

them. The integrity of this tournament cannot be damaged."

Masur, who saved the organisers a future headache by beating Pioline 7-5, 6-4, was far from happy.

"I thought it really disrupted the match, almost to the point of being absurd. Once players and umpires lose confidence in it the whole match can become a shambles."

Pioline, who beat Masur in last year's U.S. Open final, was able to see the funny side, joking that the machine had gone off because he was "an iron man."

He and most other top players agree the accuracy of the magnet-based machine, which attracts iron filings inserted in the ball, is impressive when it works.

But reservations persist about the cost of installing the system worldwide, the range of the magnetic field on the baseline and the added responsibilities for umpires who operate a hand-held computer key-pad.

The controversy also deflected attention away from a remarkable performance by Masur's team mate Nicole Provis against world number 18 Nathalie Tauziat, which set Australia on the road to a 3-0 win.

Provis trailed by a set and 5-2 before clawing her way back to win the longest match of the tournament 4-6, 7-6, 6-2

in two hours 14 minutes.

"At a set and 5-2 down, you're saying 'see you later,'" admitted Provis. "But Nathalie got a bit nervous. I started to get on top and won it in the end."

Australia now meet the winners of Tuesday's quarterfinal between Switzerland and top seeds the Czech Republic, represented by Petr Korda and Jana Novotna.

Korda revealed Monday he was glad to see the back of 1993, despite scooping a two-million U.S. dollar jackpot by winning the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last month.

"I had so many injuries last year I want to put it all in a box and throw it away. I just had one great week, that's all."

The line-call system behaved itself during the evening session as unseeded Austria beat former champions Spain to secure a semifinal against either Germany or the United States.

Judith Wiesner defeated world number four Conchita Martinez in straight sets and Alex Antonitsch then recovered from a set down to beat Emilio Sanchez 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 to settle the tie.

"I was happier with the result than the way I played... I got myself out of trouble," Antonitsch said.

Meanwhile, Ivan Lendl said Monday he has shelved any plans of retirement from top-level tennis until the end of this

year. The 33-year-old Lendl, now an American citizen and playing on a U.S. team for the first time at the Hopman Cup, said he felt happier about his game after a seven-week winter break from the circuit.

"I'm definitely giving myself the whole year," said Lendl, who had a dismal 1993 with first-round defeats at the Australian, French and U.S. Opens.

"I'll just play for the year and see how I like it and feel about it."

Lendl, who will make a rare foray into mixed doubles with Mary Joe Fernandez this week, agreed his enthusiasm for the game was at a low ebb when he completed his final tournament of the year in Antwerp last November.

"I'd seen plenty of tennis balls by the end of the year, yes," he said. "But I still enjoy it and I've no plans to retire at the moment."

Lendl, winner of eight Grand Slam singles titles in a 15-year professional career, has entered the New South Wales Open in Sydney next week in the build-up to the Australian open from Jan. 17-30.

He is now ranked 19th in the world and has not won a Grand Slam title since beating Stefan Edberg in the Australian Open final at Melbourne four years ago.

Baudone upsets Appelmans in Australian hardcourt

BRISBANE, Australia (Agencies) — Italian Natalia Baudone upset 10th-seeded Sabine Appelmans of Belgium 7-5, 6-3 in searing heat Monday in the first round of the \$150,000 Australian Women's Hardcourt Tennis Championship.

Baudone, who was born in Belgium, coped better with the blazing sun than did her opponent and gave credit to the six days she spent preparing in Brisbane prior to the event.

Appelmans' compatriot, Sandra Wasserman, enjoyed better fortune when her Austrian opponent, Barbara Schett, withdrew because of heat exhaustion.

Schett won the first set 6-3, lost the second 5-7 and was down 0-3 in the third when she was overcome by the oppressive heat and could not continue.

The temperature on the Milton tennis centre's rebound courts was later measured at around 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit).

Australian Michelle Jaggard-Lai, a semifinalist last year, advanced with a 6-4, 6-0 victory over American Jolene Watanabe, while Petra Bergerow of Germany had to save four match points before defeating Australian Lisa McShea 2-6, 7-6 (6-3), 6-2.

In other matches, 12th-seeded Linda Ferrando of Italy beat American Caroline Kuhlman 4-6, 6-3, 6-2, No. 13 Irena Spirlea of Romania defeated compatriot Catalina Cristea 6-4, 6-1, and 14th-seeded Mexican Angelica Gavaldon swept past German Karin Rschwend 6-4, 6-2.

Tenage stars Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria and Lindsay Davenport of the United

States are the top two seeds, but both had first round byes.

Audra Keller of the United States earned a second-round meeting with Maleeva by defeating Petra Ritter of Austria 7-5, 6-1. Lea Gbirardi of France will play Davenport after ousting Ruxandra Dragomir of Romania 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.

The 56-woman tournament continues through Sunday. It is one of a series of events before the Australian Open, which starts on Jan. 17 at the National Tennis Centre in Melbourne.

Meanwhile in Adelaide, Australian Pat Cash's tennis comeback was in tatters Monday after he strained his lower back in his first official men's tour match in 15 months.

The 1987 Wimbledon champion, who had been out of action for more than a year with a left knee injury, sustained the back injury in his

first round Australian Men's Hardcourt Championship loss to Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

The Russian teenager won 4-6, 6-1, 6-3 in one hour 59 minutes, but for two thirds of the match Cash was in considerable discomfort.

"I can't believe it, my knee's feeling fantastic but the back's no good," Cash said later.

The 28-year-old Australian said he was unlikely to play a scheduled doubles match Tuesday where he is paired with Barcelona Olympic champion Marc Rosset against Jason Stoltenberg and Patrick Rafter of Australia.

But he still hopes he may be alright for next week's New South Wales Open in Sydney, where he has been granted a wild card.

Sporting Gijon lives a dream after toppling Barcelona

MADRID (R) — Sporting Gijon's dream season became Barcelona's nightmare as the Spanish champions crashed 2-0 to the north-coast club at the weekend.

"Wonderful, they were wonderful," enthused Mariano Garcia Remon, trainer of Sporting whose shock home victory Sunday lifted them to third place in the league table, a point behind Barcelona.

"Sporting is living a great dream and I hope we don't wake up before the end of the season," he added.

Despite the harrowing defeat, some of the good humour seemed to have rubbed off on Barcelona's notoriously outspoken Dutch coach, Johan Cruyff.

"I prefer to lose against a team like Sporting which, in terms of football, lets every one enjoy themselves," he said, but added: "I liked Sporting a lot but Barcelona very little."

He criticised Barcelona for failing to create sufficient goal-scoring opportunities and for their inability to repulse Sporting's counter attacks.

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Dozens killed, hundreds injured as Afghan foes battle

KABUL (AFP) — Bloody fighting continued in two districts of the Afghan capital Monday, leaving dozens dead and hundreds injured in what an international observer said was a bitter struggle between the Taliban and the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Poisonous shells and mortar bombs began raining down on the capital Kabul at dawn after an overnight lull in the fighting between forces led by northern warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum and Mr. Rabbani's troops fighting for supremacy in Afghanistan.

Plumes of smoke spiralled over the Afghan capital from rocket and artillery fire that battered residential areas of the city, killing dozens and injuring more than 800 in the worst fighting in Kabul for at least a decade.

A spokesman said a death toll of 70 was a conservative estimate and the final toll was likely to be much higher because the intensity of the fighting was making it hard for families to take the wounded to hospital.

Witnesses said they saw dozens of dead and injured trapped by the fighting in the Soviet-built Microvion housing complex in the north of the city where many families of Gen. Dostum's men live.

An official of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reported three days of heavy fighting in Dostum's stronghold in the northern district of Mazari-e-Sharif between the two warring factions.

One hospital alone ran by the ICRC in Mazari-e-Sharif had admitted 70 injured, ICRC official Andreas Pfiffner said.

"We carried out the attack because we wanted to change the political system in Afghanistan," Gen. Fauzi, a senior commander of Gen. Dostum's troops in Kabul, said by telephone.

Neither side has made any attempt to begin peace talks. Afghan embassy and government opponents said the clashes had spread to bases held by rivals in Faryab and Kanduz in the north although Kabul remained the key battle ground.

Mr. Rabbani, threatened by a three-pronged onslaught by Gen. Dostum and his new-found allies, was bringing fresh troops to Kabul, sources in his Jamiat-e-Islami party said.

The fighting in Kabul resumed with "fresh ferocity" early Monday after a quiet night. Sources in the rival camp said Mr. Rabbani himself had moved out of Kabul as rockets fired by Dostum's forces slammed the presidential palace on the third consecutive day.

They said he was in nearby Paghman, headquarters of the Ittihad-e-Islami of fundamentalist leader Rasool Sayyaf who was siding with Mr. Rabbani.

Sources said a top Jamiat commander based in western Herat, Ismail Khan, Monday rushed arms and men to reinforce the defence of the capital.

"Planes loaded with fresh troops equipped with light weapons landed at Kabul's military air base early morning," the sources in radio contact with Kabul told AFP.

Israelis arrest Fateh activists

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops have arrested two members of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat's Fateh faction who are suspected of killing two Israelis last week, Palestinian sources said Monday.

In a raid Sunday on the Gaza Strip's Khan Yunis refugee camp, they arrested Farid Al Kaisy, 21, and Ala Abu Sita, 20, on charges of killing alleged drug dealers Chaim Weizman, 34, and David Buhilil, 41, near Tel Aviv last Friday.

The two were reportedly seen writing on the main Khan Yunis mosque that "the Ahmad Abu Rich group carried out the murder of the two Zionists dogs at Ramla to avenge the army's killing of Ahmad Abu Rich."

Mr. Kaisy, Mr. Abu Sita and two other Palestinians who were at large had shown camp residents four cars they said they had cut from their victims, Palestinians said.

Undercover Israeli troops shot dead Ahmad Khaled Abu Rich, a 20-year-old member of the Fateh Hawks, on Nov. 28, shortly after he had been set free from prison.

The Hawks vowed afterwards to resume their armed attacks which they had abandoned on Mr. Arafat's orders following the Sept. 13 autonomy accord.

The army also arrested Mohammad Abu Rich, a former member of the Islamic Jihad Movement who had been pardoned at the same time as his brother Ahmad.

Soldiers also raided the Bureil camp and arrested Yasser Taha, 20, a member of the Izzedine Al Qassam, the armed wing of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

A wave of violence since the historic Sept. 13 accord has left 47 Palestinians and 21 Israelis dead. Thirty Palestinians have been killed by other Palestinians, most on suspicion they were collaborators.

The killings threatened to further undercut Israeli confidence in peacekeeping with the PLO, both because a Fateh member claimed responsibility and because the attack occurred inside Israel.

Hisham Abdul Karak, a prominent Fateh leader in Gaza, said he heard about Friday's attack from the press and stressed that his group had not sanctioned the killing.



'UPRISING' Two unidentified civilians lie dead Sunday after a firefought on the road to Rancho Nuevo with Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) rebels in Mexico. The rebels occupied the townships here and in four other cities late Saturday demanding an end to what they call government oppression of indigenous people (see page 8). According to official reports, at least six people have died in the uprising. Unconfirmed reports put the death toll higher (AFP photo)

Hurd says no danger of peace process breakdown

LONDON (Agencies) — Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said Monday there was no danger of the Middle East peace plan collapsing.

Israel withheld approval Sunday for a new round of peace talks with the Palestinians, and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin reportedly told his cabinet he was willing to let Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat "sweat a bit."

"I think both Prime Minister Rabin and Mr. Arafat have gone past the point where either of them would wish to go back to the previous confusion and disagreement," Mr. Hurd told reporters as he left London for a tour of the Middle East.

"But of course there is a lot of hard practical negotiating and work on the ground to be done," said Mr. Hurd before leaving for Lebanon, Israel and Jordan.

The foreign secretary said Britain would play a prominent role in the region this year. "This is going to be a crucial year, whether it is the reconstruction of Beirut which I shall be hearing about there whether it is the coming together of the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and Jericho which I will be visiting, or whether it is Jordan where we have close links and intend to renew them," Mr. Hurd told reporters at London's Heathrow airport.

In Beirut, Mr. Hurd was to meet President Elias Hrawi, Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and Foreign Minister Faris Bouze. He was to leave later for

Israel, the occupied territories and Jordan, and is also due to meet Palestinian officials in Jerusalem before wrapping up his tour in Malta on Jan. 6.

Mr. Hurd's visit to Lebanon is the first by a British foreign secretary since the 1975-1990 civil war.

It comes as Lebanon seeks billions of dollars in foreign aid and loans to rebuild the country.

More than 100 representatives of British firms travelled to Lebanon last year to find out at first hand of investment chances in Lebanon, according to the British embassy.

The U.S.-based management consultants KPMG secured a deal to help overlook, prepare documents and assist in the planning of Lebanon's state-run Council for Development and Reconstruction.

The British firm Trafalgar House applied for a tender to take part in the expansion of Beirut international airport, where a \$400 million reconstruction programme is expected to be launched this year.

The president of the Lebanese industrialists' association, Jacques Sarraf, is expected to lead a delegation of businessmen to London later this month to discuss ways of bolstering ties between the two countries.

Also in 1994, Britain hopes to reopen in Beirut the British Council, which was closed in 1986.

Around 300 Britons live in Lebanon, not including 5,000 people who hold dual British and Lebanese nationalities.

4 killed in Algeria

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Two civilians had their throats cut and their heads cut off by an armed Algerian gang, while two car park attendants were shot dead at the weekend, press reports said here Monday.

A teacher and a former fighter in the war of independence had their throats slit and "were horribly decapitated" at Touila village near Al Tarf in eastern Algeria overnight Saturday, the Alger Republic daily reported.

Gunmen with automatic weapons earlier on Saturday killed the car park attendants in Algiers, the Liberte daily reported.

Algerian security officials said Sunday that seven civilians, including a woman, were murdered on Thursday and Friday at Blida and Biskra in the south and Relizane and Chlef in the west.

Extremists have plunged the country into guerrilla war since the military intervened in January 1992 to bring about the cancellation of general elections the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The FIS was subsequently outlawed. Academics, journalists, doctors and other civilians have become a frequent target of armed gangs in their campaign of violence.

FLN to boycott dialogue

Algeria's former vanguard National Liberation Front (FLN) party will boycott a national conference called by the government, an official newspaper said Sunday.

"At its meeting on Thursday the (FLN) political bureau decided to boycott the national conference," the evening daily Al Massa said quoting sources close to the bureau.

No NFL official was immediately available for comment.

The Algerian authorities facing prolonged violence blamed on the FIS have called the conference for Jan. 25 and 26 to bring together the government and the opposition.

Its main objective is to pick a successor to the Higher Council of State, the collective presidency whose mandate is due to expire on Jan. 31.

NFL president Abdul Hamid Mahri said in an interview last month his party, Algeria's former sole ruling body, would boycott the forum if its work was merely to select new rulers.

"We consider the national conference as the ultimate forum for dialogue. What is needed from the outset is an accord. If there is this accord we will go to the conference. If not, we'll stay away," Mr. Mahri said.

France-Info radio said last week a statement from the FIS turned down proposals for a national dialogue, calling instead for continued armed struggle.

It said a three-page statement warned those who might be tempted to talk not to negotiate with "the arbitrary junta supported by arrogant foreign states and the army."

U.K. crown jewels to be moved to new museum

LONDON (AFP) — Queen Elizabeth II has given permission for the crown jewels to be moved from their high-security display in the Tower of London to a new museum that will allow the public greater access to the collection.

"In a symbolic, yet hugely important step in her mission to make the monarchy more open she will give the public unprecedented access to the priceless collection," the Mail On Sunday said of the queen's decision to house the jewels in a new museum.

The jewels which include the largest cut diamond in the world, will be displayed in armoured and illuminated cases with special fibre optic systems used to allow close inspection of detailed work, the newspaper said. "Visitors will be able to see the crown jewels as never before," Royal Curator Simon Thurley said.

"People will be able to press their noses practically against the jewels without touching them." The museum, located near Waterloo in South London, is due to open on March 24. The collection, housed since 1967 in a specially built nuclear explosion-proof museum in the Tower of London, includes Queen Elizabeth II's crown, created for George V from 6,100 diamonds, rubies and sapphires.

Queen Elizabeth installs bottom warmer in coach

LONDON (R) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth has had a bottom-warmer installed in the coach she used for ceremonial occasions such as visits by heads of state or the opening of parliament, the Guardian newspaper reported Monday.

"We have to think of the queen's comfort and I am sure this is most welcome in a cold winter," it quoted a Buckingham Palace spokesman as saying. The Guardian said the battery-powered pad which works like an electric blanket had been designed to fit under the blue brocade seat cushions in the 143-year-old coach. It is double-sized — presumably so the queen's husband Prince Philip can also benefit from it on cold days. The Guardian said the 67-year-old queen was understood to have ordered the bottom-warmer after travelling to the state opening of parliament on an exceptionally wintry day last November.

John Davenport, technical services manager of the Birmingham firm that installed the device, said: "It was an unusual request but I was delighted to help out. It wouldn't be right on frosty morning for the queen to have to climb into a cold coach."

Catholic clergyman endorses birth control

FRANKFURT (AP) — A liberal Roman Catholic bishop in Germany has called on his church to accept the use of birth control devices in developing countries. Franz Kamphaus, the bishop of Limburg, said in a newspaper interview published Sunday that natural family planning methods are simply too difficult for many Catholics in the developing world. "We can't be encouraging family planning for poor people when we are unable to show how we can be successfully practiced," Bishop Kamphaus told the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung. "Other ethical considerations should be weighed," he insisted. Pope John Paul II has insisted that contraception is intrinsically evil. "It is often unfortunately the Catholic way to think: All or nothing," Bishop Kamphaus said. Yet nations have not responded to new challenges posed by world population growth, he noted. He noted that even Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the Vatican's guardian of religious orthodoxy, has said the Catholic Church has not adequately addressed the question of what to do about the population explosion. "It is a burning topic for which we must, without now simply putting aside tradition, find some answers," Bishop Kamphaus said. Some experts say that if world population growth continues at the present rate, humanity could triple in number to 15 billion people by the end of the next century — a population the planet will not be able to sustain.

Income tax collections exceed JD120 m target

AMMAN (Jordan) — The Income Tax Department (ITD) reported that total income tax collections for 1993, up from JD120 million in 1992, exceeded the target of JD120 million.

Addressing a press conference at his office in Amman, Mr. Haddadin said that the amounts collected in the past year were more than the JD120 million target set by the government.

He said the department had widened its coverage by enlisting new individuals and companies as taxpayers.

He highlighted that the department was continuing its decentralisation through opening new offices to facilitate tax payments by the public and by allowing payments in installments and by conducting surveys in order to cover taxpayers.

Referring to the department's functions in the past year, Mr. Haddadin said that

could meet the target due to its upgraded collection system and counting on continued favourable response on the part of the payers and their cooperation with various ITD branches around the country.

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239 of his employees took refresher courses in statistics, economic matters computer, public service, legal matters, management and accountancy in cooperation with other departments and the Institute of Public Administration.

He said the department would this year refund taxpayers taxes which they had paid in excess of their tax dues.

Mr. Haddadin mentioned that the department's new offices which were opened last year were in the central north and western districts of Amman.

The new offices, he added, do save time and effort for the taxpayers by allowing them to pay their dues at their regions.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel's Likud

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Almost one third of the right-wing Likud party's 1993 members have failed to renew their membership, the independent Haaretz newspaper said Monday. The party's 1993 membership of 70,000 members was down from 90,000 in 1992. The annual dues which have doubled to \$6.6 million, Haaretz said, Mr. Netanyahu, the prime minister, said the party's leader last week that the party's 17,000 members had not paid their dues. In an interview on military radio he admitted his party was going through a "difficult period of readjustment."

Ariel Sharon, a rival for the Likud leadership, charged at a party meeting in the Tel Aviv Sunday that Mr. Netanyahu lacked authority and he denounced those "who blame others when they are caught with their pants down."

Japan searches for 17 missing from ship

TOKYO (R) — Japan's coast guard Monday marched by air and sea for 17 crew members missing after their Cyprus-registered freighter sank off western Japan but hopes of finding anyone alive were very slim. There was little hope of anyone having survived two days in cold Pacific waters, a coast guard official said. Twelve of the 29 crew aboard the Arctic Reefer were picked out of the sea late Saturday after their freighter sank some 300 kilometres south of Shikoku, an island south-west of Kobe and Osaka in western Japan.

Peace negotiators receive Grand Cross

OSLO (AFP) — Leading Palestinian peace negotiator Ahmad Qoreia and his Israeli counterpart Uri Savir on Monday received the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit at Norway's government guest house, the foreign ministry said. The two men received the award for their roles in last autumn's negotiations leading to the Sept. 13 signing of the declaration of principles on limited Palestinian autonomy. Monday's ceremony was followed by an official luncheon at Tuesday, the two will have an audience with King Harald V, as well as an official dinner Tuesday evening at the government guest house. The Grand Cross is the highest distinction awarded to foreigners in Norway.

Rebels ambush policemen in Djibouti

DIJBOUTI (R) — Rebels from the Afar tribe wounded five policemen — two seriously — when they ambushed their vehicle in northern Djibouti last Friday, local officials said. The rebel front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy is fighting against police in the north of the Red Sea

country to end what it sees as the rival Issa tribe's dominance in government.

Iraqi soldiers shoot coast guard — Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (R) — Iraqi soldiers in a boat shot and wounded a Kuwaiti coast guard after violating the emirate's territorial waters in the northern Gulf, the Interior Ministry said Monday. A spokesman said the coast guard was hit by two bullets in an exchange of fire Sunday between a Kuwaiti patrol and the Iraqis near Buhayra Island on the Shuaiba Peninsula, a waterway which divides the two countries. An officer and two soldiers were on board the Iraqi boat, said the independent newspaper Al Anba. They attacked the Kuwaiti patrol after it fired warning shots. There was no immediate comment from Baghdad on the incident.

French Jews call for ban on Zhirinovskiy

PARIS (AFP) — Leaders of France's Jewish community called Monday on the government to refuse entry to Russian ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. In a statement the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France (CRIF) called on "the highest authorities" to ban Mr. Zhirinovskiy on account of his "racist, anti-Semitic (and) xenophobic theories." Stressing Bonn had already refused to grant the ultra-nationalist leader an entry visa, the CRIF said it would be "totally inconsistent" for France to struggle against racism and anti-Semitism while "offering such a man the chance to express... theories of exclusion and hatred in our country." Mr. Zhirinovskiy, who several media reports have described as having a Jewish father, said Dec. 30 that he hoped to visit France in February and hold talks with political leaders. French European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure said Sunday that France might refuse entry to Mr. Zhirinovskiy because of his "intolerance" policies.

Ankara slams Brussels over clashes

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Monday blamed Belgian authorities for clashes between Turks and Kurds in Brussels over the weekend which injured five policemen. A statement by the Foreign Ministry also demanded an explanation for comments by Belgian Interior Minister Louis Tobback blaming the Turks for the clashes. The Belgian charge d'affaires was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Monday morning to explain the comments, diplomatic sources said. "The Belgian authorities are without doubt responsible for authorising the PKK (Kurdish Labour Party) supporters to demonstrate in an area where many Turks live," the statement said. "The Belgian authorities, not following the example of Germany or France by banning the PKK, paved the way for such incidents to occur on Belgian territory," it said. Five policemen and a number of others were hurt Saturday evening when a group of up to 200 Kurds from Germany clashed with local Turks in the Saint Josse district of the Belgian capital. (see page 2).

